

Library Periodicals  
Clatsop Community College

Archives

# RAIN

---

## MAGAZINE

---





# RAIN

---

## MAGAZINE

40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY EDITION

SPRING 2008

CLATSOP COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE LIBRARY

JUL 14 2008

1680 LEXINGTON AVE  
ASTORIA, OREGON



**RAIN Magazine** is an annual production of students and faculty at Clatsop Community College in Astoria, Oregon. Funding is provided by the generous support of private patrons and local businesses sponsors.

**Student Staff:** Amy Willis, Bill Kaspar, Stephanie Wise, Stacy Smith, Casey Ruic  
Special thanks to David Lee Myers and Lucien Swerdloff for technical support.

**Page Layout and Design:** Stacy Smith & Stephanie Wise

**Cover Art:** "Pay Close Attention" collaboration by Jesse Reno and Lana Guerra  
2X2ft acrylic, oil pastel, colored pencil on wood, original at Lunar Boy Gallery.

**Cover Design by CCC Computer Graphics students:** Kody Hamp, Gail Hippensteel, Jason Karns, Diane Lane, Bren Leach, Joseph McCartin, James Santee, Stephanie Thomas, James Toyas, Daniel Wallace, Robert Wilson

*Adaptation of Abraham Lincoln's Words* by Kim Stafford was originally published in *Orion Magazine*. Reprinted by permission of the author.

**Text and Graphics:** Printed by Ann Gydé, CCC Publications Services

**Cover Printed by** Multnomah Printing  
Portland, OR 97214

**Perfect Binding by** Rose City Bindery  
Portland, OR 97210

**Mail submissions for future editions to:**

Nancy Cook, Editor  
RAIN Magazine  
1653 Jerome Ave.  
Astoria, OR 97103  
ncook@clatsopcc.edu



**Submissions are accepted between October 1 and January 1.** No more than 10 pages prose, 3 poems, or 3 high resolution digital graphics. Please include SASE for return. Otherwise we'll recycle your manuscript. **Include name, address, phone number, email and a brief bio with all entries.** Online submissions are welcome as Word attachments, high resolution JPG or TIF files. Include full author information. Submissions (online or otherwise) which arrive without proper contact information will not be considered.

Submissions were voted for acceptance by members of the student staff: **No material in RAIN Magazine may be reproduced without the author's written consent.**



# TABLE of CONTENTS

## POETRY

Tricia Gates Brown	<i>Naming Things</i>	1
	<i>Almost Healed</i>	3
	<i>Sackcloth and Ashes</i>	4
Donald Thompson	<i>Phylo Hotel</i>	5
	<i>A Natural History</i>	5
Reba Owens	<i>The Copper Taste</i>	12
	<i>Erosion</i>	13
Dwight Norfleet Jr.	<i>The Forest</i>	14
Frank Miller	<i>A Wasted Life</i>	16
Vincent Reynolds	<i>The One-Breasted Woman</i>	17
	<i>Note to a Nephew</i>	19
	<i>The Good Dark</i>	20
Scott Starbuck	<i>The Old One's Letter</i>	27
Susan Firghil Park	<i>A Murder of Crows</i>	37
Kim Hazel	<i>Paradisical Citrus</i>	38
	<i>Steel Meal</i>	40
Pattra Burnetto Monroe	<i>This is a Peace Poem</i>	111
	<i>For the Love of a Fisherman</i>	112
John Schmidt	<i>Mary of North Head</i>	113
	<i>End of the West</i>	114
Mary Tanguay Webb	<i>Everything Goes Downstream</i>	115
Wanda Derby	<i>Fish and Finns</i>	121
Cyndi Mudge	<i>Poems from Netul</i>	122
Vera Wildauer	<i>Too Much to Carry</i>	123
Brian F. Harrison	<i>Casting Off Childhood</i>	124
David Densmore	<i>Dumpster Diver</i>	130
Debra Brimacombe	<i>Rainy Days Billy Traces His Reflection</i>	
	<i>on the Window With A Sticky Finger</i>	132
	<i>Taken</i>	133
	<i>Wind</i>	134
John Ciminello	<i>Two Haiku</i>	135
KimChi Vo	<i>Not Knowing What to Say</i>	141
Robert Michael Pyle	<i>At the Blue Star</i>	142
	<i>Disappointments in the Potato Line</i>	143
Julie Whitus	<i>Death by Salt</i>	146
Barbara Stoffer	<i>Henry's Rhubarb</i>	148
Amy Willis	<i>Lucidity, Life, Repeat</i>	162
	<i>Butterfly Barbarians</i>	183
	<i>.03 Units Deducted</i>	184
Casey Ruic	<i>Like Ants Before God</i>	164
	<i>Metropolitan Funeral Procession</i>	165

James Dott	<i>Of Wood</i>	167
	<i>Small Things</i>	168
	<i>Vine Maple</i>	170
Claudia Harper	<i>All Quiet on the Western River</i>	178
	<i>Haiku Day</i>	180
Jon Broderick	<i>How to Tell a Good One</i>	181
David Campiche	<i>Gray in Yellow Headlights</i>	182
Patrick Overton	<i>The River</i>	186
Jacqui Horton	<i>The House in Dalarna</i>	199
Dennis Warren	<i>Please Forget Me</i>	200

## FICTION

Jan Bono	<i>The Tempest</i>	21
Calandra Frederick	<i>Dreaming of Reality</i>	28
Judith Woodward	<i>Himself</i>	117
O. Kelly	<i>Brothers Keeper</i>	156

## NONFICTION

Shawn Hunter	<i>Thick as Thieves</i>	6
Luc Fenix	<i>Crossing a Range (Twice)</i>	42
Shannon Jones	<i>History in the Sand</i>	125
Gail Balden	<i>Traffic Report</i>	128
Alex Dustin	<i>The Burning of Fort Clatsop</i>	136
Sue Falkner Wood	<i>When the Wind Came</i>	151
	<i>The Shrinking Woman</i>	153
Pat Densmore	<i>Going North</i>	158
Dennis Warren	<i>Jesus in the Dorms</i>	154
Sunny Cook	<i>O</i>	171
Anne Nixon	<i>The Greenman House</i>	188
Jacqui Horton	<i>Vi Hokannson Gale</i>	196

## ARTWORK

Patience Wubben	<i>Wooden Souls</i>	2
LaRee Johnson	<i>Gulls by Bridge</i>	11
	<i>River Traffic</i>	114
	<i>Big Red</i>	121
Becca Morris	<i>River Walk Bench</i>	18
Philip Smith	<i>Posthumous</i>	24
Mary Tanguay Webb	<i>Mary Todd Workers Bar &amp; Grill</i>	26
Stacy Smith	<i>Pigeon Stairs</i>	36



Angela Baumgartner	<i>Bird of Solitude</i>	47
Kitty Paino	<i>Lady Camille</i>	140
Kirsten Horning	<i>Chinook</i>	127
Christopher Vaughn	<i>Under The Ferns</i>	131
Don Nisbett	<i>Bench by the River</i>	147
Rosetta Hurley	<i>Storm of December 2007</i>	152
Diane D. Lane	<i>Daybreak, East Mooring Basin</i>	161
David Lee Myers	<i>Tower</i>	163
Andrew Cier	<i>Tracks of Life</i>	169
	<i>Orange Bumper</i>	179
	<i>Portal of Education</i>	200
Ben Hunt	<i>Bridge 1, 2 and 3</i>	185
Don Anderson	<i>Elmer Crow</i>	187

## HAVING EVERYTHING RIGHT SECTION

Lucien Swerdloff	<i>Having Everything Right Poster</i>	49
Kim Stafford	<i>The Creative Life</i>	50
	<i>Having Everything Right</i>	51
	<i>A Life of Art in a Busy World</i>	51
	<i>Comments at the Coastal Natural History Center</i>	64
	<i>Courtship at Indian Beach</i>	68
Kim Stafford	<i>Adaptation of Lincoln's Words</i>	96
David Plechl	<i>Stewards of the Land and Sea</i>	52
Tom Horning	<i>Comments at Neawanna Point</i>	60
Neal Maine	<i>How Do We Engage the Community?</i>	62
Jay Raskin	<i>A Welcome to Ecola</i>	66
Carol Knutson	<i>No One Owns the Source</i>	71
Peter Lindsey	<i>Splitting Wood as an Art</i>	73
	<i>Crowing</i>	74
Nancy Montgomery	<i>Welcome to the River Theater</i>	76
Kim Stafford & Robert Adams		
Steve Forrester, moderator	<i>Conversation at the River Theater</i>	77
Robert Adams	<i>If We Got Some Things Right</i>	88
Kristin Shauck	<i>Life-Sized Sea Turtle Project</i>	90
Richard Rowland	<i>Custodial Aesthetics</i>	91
Royal Nebeker	<i>When Place Is Part of the Family</i>	92
David Lee Myers	<i>A Sense of Place - A Sense of Care</i>	95
	<i>River of Gifts</i>	99
Robert Michael Pyle	<i>Blessing</i>	101
	<i>Closing</i>	105
David Campiche	<i>Howling Dog Moon</i>	103

## 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY SECTION 107

James Dott	<i>Of Wood</i>	167
	<i>Small Things</i>	168
	<i>Vine Maple</i>	170
Claudia Harper	<i>All Quiet on the Western River</i>	178
	<i>Haiku Day</i>	180
Jon Broderick	<i>How to Tell a Good One</i>	181
David Campiche	<i>Gray in Yellow Headlights</i>	182
Patrick Overton	<i>The River</i>	186
Jacqui Horton	<i>The House in Dalarna</i>	199
Dennis Warren	<i>Please Forget Me</i>	200

## FICTION

Jan Bono	<i>The Tempest</i>	21
Calandra Frederick	<i>Dreaming of Reality</i>	28
Judith Woodward	<i>Himself</i>	117
O. Kelly	<i>Brothers Keeper</i>	156

## NONFICTION

Shawn Hunter	<i>Thick as Thieves</i>	6
Luc Fenix	<i>Crossing a Range (Twice)</i>	42
Shannon Jones	<i>History in the Sand</i>	125
Gail Balden	<i>Traffic Report</i>	128
Alex Dustin	<i>The Burning of Fort Clatsop</i>	136
Sue Falkner Wood	<i>When the Wind Came</i>	151
	<i>The Shrinking Woman</i>	153
Pat Densmore	<i>Going North</i>	158
Dennis Warren	<i>Jesus in the Dorms</i>	154
Sunny Cook	<i>O</i>	171
Anne Nixon	<i>The Greenman House</i>	188
Jacqui Horton	<i>Vi Hokannson Gale</i>	196

## ARTWORK

Patience Wubben	<i>Wooden Souls</i>	2
LaRee Johnson	<i>Gulls by Bridge</i>	11
	<i>River Traffic</i>	114
	<i>Big Red</i>	121
Becca Morris	<i>River Walk Bench</i>	18
Philip Smith	<i>Posthumous</i>	24
Mary Tanguay Webb	<i>Mary Todd Workers Bar &amp; Grill</i>	26
Stacy Smith	<i>Pigeon Stairs</i>	36



Angela Baumgartner	<i>Bird of Solitude</i>	47
	<i>Lady Camille</i>	140
Kitty Paino	<i>Chinook</i>	127
Kirsten Horning	<i>Under The Ferns</i>	131
Christopher Vaughn	<i>Bench by the River</i>	147
Don Nisbett	<i>Storm of December 2007</i>	152
Rosetta Hurley	<i>Daybreak, East Mooring Basin</i>	161
Diane D. Lane	<i>Tower</i>	163
David Lee Myers	<i>Tracks of Life</i>	169
Andrew Cier	<i>Orange Bumper</i>	179
	<i>Portal of Education</i>	200
Ben Hunt	<i>Bridge 1, 2 and 3</i>	185
Don Anderson	<i>Elmer Crow</i>	187

## HAVING EVERYTHING RIGHT SECTION

Lucien Swerdloff	<i>Having Everything Right Poster</i>	49
Kim Stafford	<i>The Creative Life</i>	50
	<i>Having Everything Right</i>	51
	<i>A Life of Art in a Busy World</i>	51
	<i>Comments at the Coastal Natural History Center</i>	64
	<i>Courtship at Indian Beach</i>	68
Kim Stafford	<i>Adaptation of Lincoln's Words</i>	96
David Plechl	<i>Stewards of the Land and Sea</i>	52
Tom Horning	<i>Comments at Neawanna Point</i>	60
Neal Maine	<i>How Do We Engage the Community?</i>	62
Jay Raskin	<i>A Welcome to Ecola</i>	66
Carol Knutson	<i>No One Owns the Source</i>	71
Peter Lindsey	<i>Splitting Wood as an Art</i>	73
	<i>Crowing</i>	74
Nancy Montgomery	<i>Welcome to the River Theater</i>	76
Kim Stafford & Robert Adams		
Steve Forrester, moderator	<i>Conversation at the River Theater</i>	77
Robert Adams	<i>If We Got Some Things Right</i>	88
Kristin Shauck	<i>Life-Sized Sea Turtle Project</i>	90
Richard Rowland	<i>Custodial Aesthetics</i>	91
Royal Nebeker	<i>When Place Is Part of the Family</i>	92
David Lee Myers	<i>A Sense of Place - A Sense of Care</i>	95
	<i>River of Gifts</i>	99
Robert Michael Pyle	<i>Blessing</i>	101
	<i>Closing</i>	105
David Campiche	<i>Howling Dog Moon</i>	103

## 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY SECTION 107





## Naming Things

*Tricia Gates Brown*

We did not know what waited. No one  
but us and those trees. You wanted to teach me  
the names, to show me a spring. You even saved  
my drowning dog! Slipped so easily

into the glove of hero. But I could feel  
your caution harden as we stepped close,  
the way your air grew heavy  
and clenched, like a shell you couldn't

discard. How the womb of your mind  
turned in on itself, snug in its woolen  
fear. Couldn't you see how singular, how  
auspicious that moment? Couldn't you choose

just once, to be brave? Nothing could wedge  
a gap between the rings of your life, so tight  
and deafening, a border-patrol psyche.  
The decision of a man to flee.

There was no place for us to go that day,  
that time. I draped my arm around you,  
asked of your ancestors—willed you  
to turn my way, to seize a chance

forever. You were unreachable. Yet time,  
all that time, and I still stand, one arm frozen  
around you. You flew in the manner  
of a bird. You can return in the manner

of a bird—my arm outstretched for miles,  
for months. You can gather courage.

You can gather courage.

I will teach you the name for this.



Wooden Souls

*Patience Wubben*



## Almost Healed

*Tricia Gates Brown*

Winter, I drop by.

Your home a roman catacomb, you subdued  
with a cold, awakened  
at evening, eyes and shoulders a droop

of defeat, let down by your body—that refuge  
from emotion, humanity, sexuality. We sprawl  
on the floor before your fire, drink tea.  
No, I sprawl. You sit upright in a stiff-

backed chair, at first. The more stalwart for all  
your desire. We tell stories as slowly  
you fold. The weight of reproach like a yoke lifted  
as you slip into a stretch on the rug.

The change at once familiar, at once so charged!  
Your old transmutation: dread blue to  
vermillion. You are Ireland; it is spring;  
trees are dancing. I remember this.

Your stories: Childhood—you were small.  
Stuck in a ditch on a day so hot boots  
melted to your feet! Or how you took that old  
donkey out for a spin! I had never seen

you laugh—not like that. Had never seen  
such joy, such resurrection on your face. You shone  
with the newness of a thousand infant tears.  
It was almost birth. You almost believed.

We were almost healed.

## Sackcloth and Ashes

*Tricia Gates Brown*

Lift the sackcloth of midnight  
and find me, like bread rising for the morning  
meal, old dormitories of longing  
adorned for laughter's revival.

You are not so famished you cannot  
eat. Not so tired your hands can't ring  
the dawn bell. Your heart, even sleeping,  
shakes the rafters. Ashes of old lives—

let the wind take them. I smell sweet-peas  
on the breeze blowing in. The whole  
night, full of one blossom's scent.

While you were drifting, musicians have tuned.  
While you were crawling, the dreary sky opened,  
a stippling of stars, and wrote our names.

## Phylo Hotel

*Donald Thompson*

The Phylo Hotel as the trains roll,  
shake the thin window glass,  
more old paint flakes to the sidewalk,  
the click of ball against ball across the street;  
smell of beer, urine, smoke,  
a brassy laugh, cacophony,  
a garbage can lid clatters in the rain.  
The tall woman turns to the man with the cane  
and kisses his fine brown lips,  
as a slight white boy in a battered hat  
blows *Mood Indigo* in the doorway.

## A Natural History

*Donald Thompson*

The woman grinding acorns smiles and nods  
Then fades beyond the old worn tools and glass,  
Residing where the holy realm of gods  
Is manifest in lakes, and deer, and grass.  
This museum archives the stately march  
Of chaos in tools, shoes, marked bones of chance,  
Portrays the face of myth at every arch  
But gone are songs, the rhythms of their dance.  
A smoke is lit, embers of the fire stirred  
Coyote and old Raven laugh their tales,  
A fish is speared, snare fashioned for a bird  
A docent locks the doors and tallies sales.  
These ancient ghosts exist in spiral time  
This place where past and future intertwine.



# Thick as Thieves

## *Shawn Hunter*

The charts and markings can't be trusted.

We made pizza and crossed the river into Washington to eat it. Walking from the shoulder of the road beneath the decommissioned military fort that once stood sentry over the mouth of the Columbia River, and winding beneath the grove of trees that rustled gently in the weighted atmosphere of the Pacific Northwest night, before emerging on the beach that is waves of salt water at the sea's high tide and quiet conduit of fresh water at the ocean's ebb. Then we climbed, pizza in hand, through the pirate's cove and up onto the rocky promontory.

Here the last of the day's orange light stretched in a single uneven horizontal ray between the clouds and sea. Across the river were the clusters of lights—Astoria, Warrenton, Hammond, then nothing.

*It was winter, 1856, when Captain Francis Williams guided the wooden barque, Desdemona, on a route up the Pacific Coast from San Francisco bound for Astoria. The Desdemona was familiar to the coast route, and Williams made good time despite the heavy load of cargo. Just before midnight, December 31, Williams anchored the ship off the mouth of the Columbia River, choosing to wait until morning to cross the river bar.*

"No matter where else I go, it just doesn't seem to compare," she told me.

I was enamored with how well she knew the town. Every question or observation I had brought to the surface a luggage of memories. Mapping the Desdemona Sands as the tide came in and reduced the sometimes-island to a tiny circle. The hidden forest trails that, as a kid, had concealed the ropeswings and dancefloors that she and her friends spent hours at, those afternoons held in scars and stories of youthful romances.

She liked to tell stories, each one evoking another, until it seemed as if her memory was anchor to her runaway train of thought, and she would often conclude a thought only to jump into two more; a narrative in hydra heads.

"My favorite image of this city is late at night, from the projection room window of the Columbian Theatre. You can see everything. The Flavel House is lit up really creepy, and the traffic lights blink red, like the city's heartbeat."

It was several years ago on a bicycle trip from the Olympic Peninsula to the bay of San Francisco when I arrived at the two lane bridge that spans the Columbia River

from Washington state to Oregon near the coast. The river is four miles wide at this point, and the nonexistent shoulder of the bridge was filled with tree bark, tire scraps and battered sea gull remains that had made their way there from the stream of RV's and logging trucks that raced past, many of them so close that I struggled against the wind pull the cars created while trying not to veer into the solid cement wall on the opposite side. Sunken drain grates lay at regular intervals, and would jar my bike beneath the weight of all my possessions strapped to the rear rack. Three miles onto the bridge, the flat road began to lift from just above water level to a height tall enough to allow clearance of the ship traffic that crossed the river beneath.

Several years later, I still regard this crossing as the scariest event of my life.

On the Oregon side I rode to the river's edge to let me nerves rest. Astoria's waterfront was a palette of atrophy and collapse. Here the river lapped against the splintering trestles and wooden pilings that once supported piers and canneries, but that over time had fallen and been carried away by the river's tides. The once-thriving past of the town lay crumbling into the river, or swallowed beneath the brush that had overgrown the riverbanks.

A couple years later, I would decide to make that city my home.

*New Year's Day, 1857. Just after daybreak, the Desdemona raised the flag signaling her desire for a bar pilot. When none came, Williams decided to take her across the bar himself. He had crossed the bar before and used his charts as he rode in on the flood tide with a fair wind. But the ship, carrying 331 tons, ran deep, and she struggled against a rough swell.*

*Then she hit.*

Astoria: a geographic siren's song. An ecology of loss. Suspended between eras of devil-may-care decadence and disintegration. Beautifully elegiac in the way one encounters, every so often, a person who it seems in prone to tragedy. The mouth of the Columbia River has been called the deadliest area of water on the Pacific Coast. It has been the ruin of over 2000 vessels, over 200 ships. This is a town where the memory of disaster is as forceful a presence as the offshore storms that funnel up the river channel, burying the town in gloom and rain the vast majority of the year. Sitting on a boulder at the river's side I wondered how the ocean appears to those aboard the ships leaving the Columbia, who pass the opalescent town, the decaying ports, passing beneath the bridge's arch that rises like a command and curving around the shipping channel in what seems an exaggerated slowness and likely isn't too much faster than when the Desdemona awaited a favorable wind to be carried across these waters. I wondered how the ocean appears when you come to the edge of land, facing the sea's uncertainty and expanse. There is no more land, no more illusion of control, and scale

is no longer anchored to the shores visible from the ship's deck, there is only you, heavens and sea, and uncertainty.

The pizza and the light ran out, and we felt our way to the other side of the rock. The moon came out in shadows behind the clouds and the city skyline made the town appear so deceptively immense.

Driving home, on the Astoria-Megler Bridge, she turned off the car lights. Passing over the Desdemona Sands, dead black somewhere in the middle of the Columbia River.

In disaster heartbeat quickens, and for a time, in the moment that precedes the collision, a moment that makes the consequences inevitable but when those consequences are not yet known, all boundaries are void. A span of time a single heartbeat in length, after which the world has been reconfigured and everything must be learnt again, anew.

Disaster is the crack in time in which our humanity still shows, the instinctual reactions—the selflessness or selfishness, the flaws in judgement, the impulsiveness that is window through our disguises. Regardless of the armor built to protect against it, we still challenge disaster. For if mere survival were enough, what reason would there be to gamble for more. If Scott knew that the mapping of Antarctica would be his death, would he have chosen to remain a ship's officer in England? If Zelda knew that loving F. Scott would be her undoing, would she have turned him away?

The examples are available and numerous, and still people climb Everest or the challenge the Sonora desert. It is the risk of madness and asphyxiation that is incendiary to lovers, the daring the sufferable consequences that makes the story worth telling. Rarely is it the well-behaved who make history.

Astoria has been where those sentenced to be lost are sent. Following World War II, the Navy docked hundreds of decommissioned battleships in Astoria to be stripped, a fleet of ghosts becoming more formless with time. As recently as the 1980's and the Reaganomics era of mental asylum closures, it is rumored that Portland's newly-homeless insane were given one-way bus tickets to Astoria. Near the height of its logging industry's output, the town built its streets, sidewalks and docks of the timber that was so abundant in the surrounding forests. On two occasions the bulk of the town was lost to fire—the second fire destroyed thirty downtown blocks and was the costliest disaster in the state's history. Then the logging industry itself disappeared. At around the same time fewer and fewer fish were returning to the river each year and the canneries along the riverfront became ruins.

On occasion, people would disappear from the town. Men who had visited the bars



and brothels would be drugged and come to as forced labor aboard ships bound for foreign ports.

Disaster is as present in the tapestry of this town today as before. In its recent history, a bar pilot, whose job it is to guide the passing ships through the Columbia River's narrow shipping channel, died when he lost hold of the ship's ladder he was climbing, his body later found off the Washington coast. Recent storms have caused landslides that have buried roads and uprooted building foundations, and a mudslide that buried a section of the railroad track that runs the 100 miles along the river to Portland have cut off any chance of train traffic into town—no plans have been made to uncover the track.

*The charts had shown deep water.*

*A Coast Guard cutter tried for hours to pull the ship from the shoal that held her, but gave up after several hawsers had broken. The Desdemona began to take on water and the crew set to work removing her cargo onto scows. Nearly complete, the final scow was overloaded to hasten the process. The river currents tossed the barge, causing it to capsize, throwing the cargo and several of the ship's crew to the water. George Cartland, one of the ship's crew, was trapped beneath the overturned barge and drowned.*

*At auction in Astoria, the wrecked ship was sold for \$215. The buyer stripped her of everything removable and abandoned her frame to the shoal. The wreck of the Desdemona remained visible for years, her frame sticking out from her spot near the Oregon shoreline until one particularly stormy winter left her buried for good. She was no longer visible except as an island of sand exposed at the ocean's ebb.*

Someone once told me that the purpose of the conscious mind is to rationalize the subconscious. Imagine it. All the words and the sensations for which there are none, the tastes and smells and the places that they can transport us that lay dormant in the memory's recesses, the desires and scars, the people who walk into our lives and the memories that disappear, every perceived object and sensation in the world around you turned into a tiny electrical impulse and translated into an arrangement we tell ourselves we can understand.

This is a trick of the human mind—to fill in the blank areas. The way that one can overlook an error in the body of a text, or find an object in an inkblot, or the way that one may create explanations and scenarios to explain the reason that a person they may be waiting for has failed to show up. Sometimes we see what we expect to see rather than what actually is.

But the mind is limited by the boundaries of the familiar—taking comfort in the familiar, and registering the unfamiliar as fear.

Somewhere between what we're told and what we fear lies what is.

Disaster comes from the feeling of the unknown being beneath one's grasp. The belief that the storm fronts and wild mood swings can be accurately forecast, the tides and shoals lie contained in the maps and charts, the unknown safely behind fences and locks.

The conscious mind leads one to rationalize that these assurances are possible.

But what good are these assurances to someone suffering a bruised body. Or a broken heart.

In risk she saw beauty. In danger she saw a challenge.

Hers was a creativity that some might dismiss as whimsical, but, like disaster, she had a way of making the boundaries disappear.

And I remember nights we spent riding bikes across bridges where she would sing so loudly the words would drown the noise of the passing cars beside us, or her spinning in circles in the sand with arms outstretched beneath the stars, or sitting and watching the lights of the ships drifting down the river from atop one of the ruins at the water's edge.

Our lives, we must navigate around the invisible shoals, doing the best we can with what we have and what we know. But occasionally the charts fail us. The tides shift the sands and we must wake up and run these strange new geographies. Disaster isn't what threatens us, it is what keeps us from switching to autopilot. Disaster is what keeps us human.

The Desdemona—the story has run through my head countless times. Her name adorns street signs and bar marquee neon, but record of her is harder to find. Regardless, her bones remain somewhere beneath the sand bar that entrapped her a century and a half ago. Around the turn of the century, a lighthouse was built upon the sand, then destroyed about thirty years later, leaving a cluster of wooden pilings which remain to this day in the river.

*At a hearing after the wreck, Captain Francis Williams testified that the lower buoy had been adrift.*

Sometimes the most seemingly insignificant factors can alter one's entire geography.

Her music played eerily as we approached the climb to the peak of the bridge. Its red lights made it appear a vertical wall from the approach, until we passed between the steel trusses as if through the skeleton of a dormant animal. When we reached the top of the bridge, she stopped the car, and we sat still, quiet, except for the music. She

looked down at the lights of Astoria, the streets empty and the traffic lights blinking its heartbeat in red, and the two of us suspended somewhere above this tiny emerald of a town.



Gulls by Bridge

*LaRee Johnson*



## The Copper Taste

*Reba Owen*

Where do you go  
when fear stops your heart  
or worse yet,  
shocks it to a speed so fast  
the last thing you feel  
are veins and sinew flying  
apart, the arteries searching  
for a way out of the almost empty,  
dark parking lot.

Away from fur and teeth  
or the face of the anesthesiologist  
blurring..

When you know no deadbolt  
or bookshelf against the door  
can stop that feeling,  
or the taste that comes  
from a fumbled key,  
silence on the phone,  
or crackling dry grass  
behind you in the woods.

Sometimes the heart  
survives by tying itself  
in a stronger knot,  
a steadier rhythm  
which on occasion  
you may share with others.

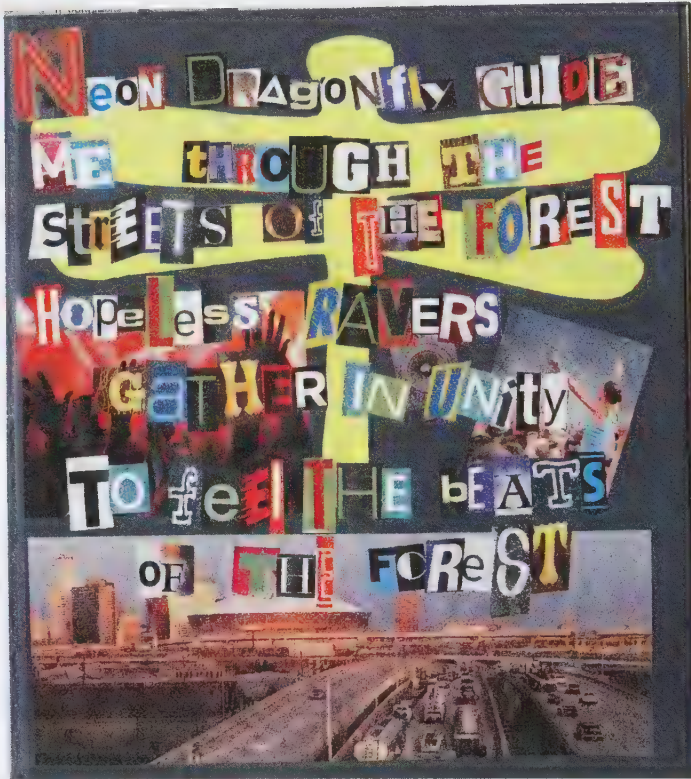
## Erosion

*Reba Owen*

Molecules bump and fuse  
in heat and chemistry  
of time, like people  
whose autonomy changes,  
riparian strips with sedge  
and loosestrife,  
scree and prairie,  
their lives spread out  
in alluvial fans,  
the lighter particles  
lost at sea.  
Even Cathedral glass  
is said to gravitate  
downward. Can it be true,  
can it be true,  
that all appointments end  
in the eolian dunes of Samara?

## The Forest

*Dwight Norfleet Jr.*



Neon dragonfly, guide me through the streets of the forest.  
Hopeless ravers gather in unity to feel the beats of the forest.

The faint cries of sirens echo throughout the alleyways.  
Low life criminals make work for the elites of the forest.

Sleepless nights spent on the scene turn to sleepy days.  
You better run quick to get a fix—oh the sweets of the forest.



He's out for a drink and one night stands cheat.  
 A wife at home not alone, between the sheets of the forest.

Spare a dollar to the once high scholar if you can.  
 No more can he indulge in the treats of the forest.

Spend hard earned cash quicker than you made it.  
 I'll get paid to sweep up the receipts of the forest.

It's easy to take the easy way out, but in time find it's not so easy.  
 Will your life like so many others, be among the defeats of the forest?

Deceptive neon lights lead the way to broken dreams.  
 I'll find you dead on the scene like the Norfleets of the forest.



## A Wasted Life

*Frank Miller*

On your knees, arms spread, trying to  
Hold back the avalanche-pelted by papers, struck by bottles,  
Bashed by rotten fruit, bones, sludge of fat and tomatoes-  
A king's hoard in such indelicate droppings-  
Mine, yours, theirs-never stops falling,  
Not while you endure, inching your way through  
The gray nether world of things.



*Philip Smith*

# The One-Breasted Woman

*Vincent Reynolds*

the one-breasted woman  
has clear eyes  
we could say, yes, that she  
has a long stride  
but it is her eyes which,  
no matter what, reflect the sun  
she never lifts her voice  
the one-breasted woman  
sees everything  
her naked gaze marks one  
As if to say  
'I see you are there.  
I take you for no more  
then what you may be,  
but never believe you are hiding from me.'  
The one-breasted woman is quiet but agitated  
you might feel protective toward her  
she is a woman who never lifts her voice  
but an archer who gives no thought to distance,  
night, fog or storms.  
having no fear, she is  
clear-seeing  
having clarity, she is self-possessed  
you may want to protect her  
yet you must still face the fact  
that you are the stranger  
that she is the inhabitant of this moment  
of this stark present  
an ancient furious harbinger of the world.



River Walk Bench

*Becca Morris*



## Note to a Nephew

*Vincent Reynolds*

It's no longer autumn, and the  
place where it always frosts  
gives up its frost more reluctantly.  
Two spider walls have set out my thoughts:  
'One last row before the freeze.'  
I'm not stranded, nor on an island,  
I just miss the peace  
a neglected pair of oars can offer.  
I row to your landing, a fog slope lowers,  
and I ponder your unimposing friendship,  
putting me in two about postponing  
any fine adventure we've planned.  
I am a bear of an uncle, fit for no one's company,  
but acquainted with sweetness—  
from the dark of the wall, the frost and the traceries—  
but gentled only when alone.  
The fog says I have people skills,  
able to understand or even forfend.  
Don't mistake; I still want odysseys in springtime,  
yet I love winter's solitude with biting faithfulness;  
The colder air sees more deeply into me.

## The Good Dark

*Vincent Reynolds*

(for Ellen Cannon Reed)

Deep underwater I have heard it said,  
"the oyster weeps, but its tears are not water."  
In ways the mind is invisible to itself.  
The body manages, scrubbing, peeling, and weeping,  
unconsciously sorting.  
The heap slumps back in consolidation,  
reflecting as well as any ore.  
From a dark well all paths are paths of temptation.  
It takes an irritant, a grot of sand from whatever tiny door  
we inhaled it through, together with dark, delicate water,  
undisturbed for years, for it and that to frame the matter.  
From a dark well, all paths are paths of realization.  
The heap, the ore, the memory, the dead,  
everything that rises and falls,  
(even the sun, though you can't see the sun from down here),  
fires us on to go where we love, and are loved,  
to the dark, even.  
To the good dark—  
the reunion.

# The Tempest

*Jan Bono*

"Well, Serena," said Marie aloud to the cat curled upon her lap, "what time do you think the wind will stop?" The howling of the trees around her home had been constant for over thirty-six hours.

The cat, oblivious to the ruckus outside, stretched, purred contentedly, and rolled over so Marie could scratch her other side.

Huddled under a blanket on the couch, Marie pulled her heavy parka closer around her. The electricity had been off all day, and the house was cold and dark. She had refused to leave, preferring to be there in the event more buckets were needed under any additional leaks in the roof as the storm progressed. Sitting by the window, Marie had enough light to read a magazine, but it was difficult to concentrate with the continuous moaning of the trees outside.

CRACK! POP! POP! POP! POP! Marie threw off the afghan, sprang to her feet, grabbed the cat and tucked her under one arm as she bolted down the hallway. Her heart pounding like a jackhammer on methamphetamines, she stood and listened for what she thought was the inevitable crash of heavy timber onto her roof.

She waited—poised, pensive, trembling from head to toe. Serena wriggled free, dropped to the bedroom floor, and with an unaffected look over her shoulder, trotted back out to the living room.

When Marie's heart calmed to a steadier beat, she followed the cat. There was no tree in the living room. She expelled the breath she'd been holding, and went to the window to peer out.

In the acreage in front of her house, she could see trees of all sizes laying this way and that. The clearing was littered with thousands of large branches and a virtual carpet of tiny bits and pieces of branches. The grass was barely visible beneath the debris. And still the wind howled. "At what point do we call this a hurricane?" she asked Serena.

Serena came at the sound of Marie's voice and rubbed against her legs. The trees whipped unrelentingly in the atmosphere above the house. Marie reached down and scratched Serena's ears. "I need some air," she said, and sat down to pull on her shoes. "You're staying here." She patted the cat on the head, and ran a playful hand down the length of her body, ending with a soft tug on Serena's tail.

Stepping out onto the porch, the force of the wind blasted her with such intensity,

Marie almost returned inside. She pulled her hood up and started across the lawn, picking her way through the debris, and approached the hillside west of the house. She could see a big ivy-covered fir tree leaning precariously a short distance inside the woods. The face of the hill in front of her was too steep to climb, so she circled around the back of the acreage and approached it from the windward side.

The cacophony of the forest sounds made her shiver involuntarily. The noise was part shriek, part scrape of tree trunk against tree trunk. Marie thought it must sound like the wailing of thousands of grieving women, all lifting their voices together in protest.

She approached the mammoth fir, and finding no way through the rubble and underbrush and fallen branches to go around it, Marie stepped tentatively up on the massive root clod to climb across. With her third step on what she believed to be solid earth, her right foot and leg plunged downward, tearing quickly through the roots to the air space created below when the roots had snapped free.

The sudden jarring crash through the dirt came to an abrupt halt as the base of her torso hit the earth. Her right foot dangled beneath the clod, her leg wedged in among the roots. Her left leg was twisted at an awkward angle, partially beneath her, but still on top of the uplifted mound. Pain shot through her in the instant she fell, but now all Marie felt was a nauseating sickness deep in her stomach. "My God," she whispered, "I'm broken."

Blood stained the thigh of her jeans on the leg still above ground. Marie tried to remain calm. "It's just a scratch," she told herself. "And maybe a sprain." She looked around her, taking stock of her predicament. "I have to get back to the house." She leaned back on the muddy earth and tried to push free from the hole her right leg had created in the root clod, but she struggled without success. Digging with her hands, she attempted to loosen the wet ground holding her captive.

Sweating at the exertion, the word *hypothermia* flittered through her mind. "Why didn't I stay in the house?" she asked the wind. In reply, it whistled ever louder through the arching, swaying trees, sending another avalanche of branches and twigs cascading around her. Water ran down inside her coat, and she shivered uncontrollably. For the first time, Marie realized the enormity of her situation.

She looked at her watch. A little after two o'clock. Her neighbor had promised to come by to check on her at four. For now, the pain was holding her attention, keeping her alert. But by four o'clock, she feared she would be unconscious, or worse. Frantically, she tore at the roots trapping her right leg.

Scratching and clawing, Marie grappled with her tormentor. She yelled, screamed,



cursed. And then suddenly, she fell silent. The thought had come to her that no one could hear her. Not now, and probably not even at four o'clock. The storm was too loud. When her neighbor arrived, he would simply think she'd decided to seek shelter elsewhere. Marie lay on her back in the mud and sobbed.

After a little while, emotionally purged for the time being, she sat back up. She brushed the wet hair from her face and tried again to scoot away on her butt. Still the roots held. Marie wondered how long before anyone would find her—her or her body. "God," she whispered, "help me." She closed her eyes and reclined again in surrender.

CRACK! CRACK! POP! Another tree gave way and crashed into her ivy-covered captor. The second tree was just big enough and heavy enough to push the giant fir a few feet closer to the ground. As it leaned, more roots popped beneath Marie. For a brief moment, she almost laughed as she imagined becoming victim to a catapult created by the huge tree crashing down while its roots sprang up, sending her body skyward.

But the big fir did not come completely down; the neighboring trees still held it aloft. Marie tried again to push free. This time she felt a small movement. With renewed hope, she shoved off one more time, and was rewarded by almost six inches of distance between the top of her right hip and the root clod. She strained with all her might, pushing as hard as she could against the sodden ground. Another six inch gain; another small victory.

Finally, she pulled herself free and rolled to the side of the mound just as the ivy-covered fir succumbed to gravity and crashed to the earth, taking two other slightly smaller trees with it. Marie was unscathed by the fallout. She lay on the wet earth, rain still coming down in buckets, and cried with relief.

For the next hour, she scooted slowly on her butt, alternately crawling and rolling over mountains of debris, painstakingly making her way back toward the house. December darkness came early, and Marie knew she had to get inside, had to get warm and dry, and she fought to maintain consciousness.

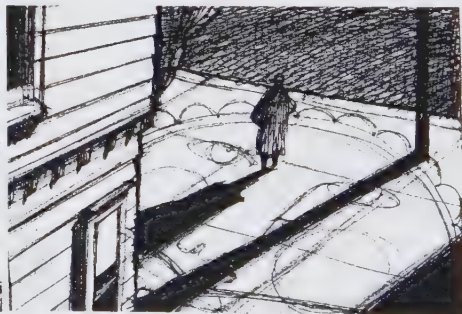
Marie had gotten as far as the edge of the driveway when her neighbor drove into her yard at 4:30. Her hands and face were covered in scratches, many of them bleeding. He jumped from his truck, lifted Marie into his arms, and carried her inside. He placed her on the couch, tucked the afghan around her, and called for an ambulance.

Unconcerned, Serena jumped up and settled herself on top of the blanket.

## Posthumous *Philip Smith*

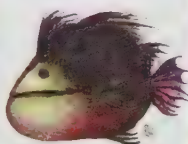
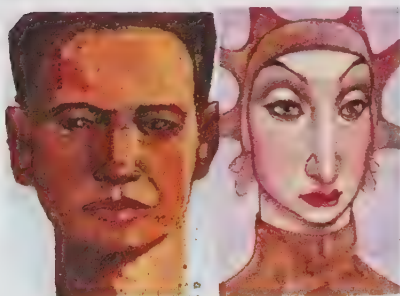


When Kristin Shauck received a call from Royal Nebeker about a press that was going to be sold at an estate sale in Hammond, she had no idea that she and her husband, Tim, would be stumbling into the fascinating, imaginative, and strange world of Philip Smith: "Nobody I know had ever even heard of Philip Smith, but apparently for years his house/studio was a place of constant and fervent artmaking. The sheer amount of artwork he produced is astonishing, and we must have acquired hundreds of drawings, paintings, and prints. Although I feel a deep sense of sadness and loss that I didn't have a chance to meet Philip during his lifetime, his phenomenal oeuvre of artwork has been an incredible inspiration to those of us who have been lucky enough to encounter it. Through the powerful, creative force of his art, this amazing artist remains very much alive." *Kristin Shauck*





*from the journals of Philip Smith*







Mary Todd Workers Bar & Grill

*Mary Tanguay Webb*



## The Old One's Letter

*Scott Starbuck*

Here a second can seem so long  
like when reaching for a fish with a net.

Other times, ten years go by  
in the blink of a love-struck eye.

I read that Inuit maps are based on "sleeps"  
and difficulty of travel.

Before leaving, you must understand  
the machine understands none of this.

## Dreaming of Reality

*Calandra Frederick*

Darkness impeding on the mind, changing the world once seen under the soft glow of daylight. How quickly it falls upon your reality, altering the things you once saw with confident clarity. One moment truth, in its radiant luminosity, remains constant and restricted within the shape you first perceived it as. Yet as night's curtain begins to drape softly across the surfaces of its form, they stretch and are altered, exposing before your searching eyes the truth conceived by your soul, altering its form to fit into your world, your reality.

Ian lowered his pen resting it lightly upon the antique wooden desk. Before him laid the source with which he was going to change the world. Wrinkled pages of half-coherent scribble were scattered across the rough surface of the cherry desk. The crinkled pages mixed with black ink splatters, which smeared themselves into unreadable messages against the blood-colored wood, formed a type of passionate collage.

More and more lately, he had felt madness clenching its grasp around his mind. It was not a force that scrambled his thoughts sending him down deep into the recesses of hell, but rather an enlightening revelation that would not release his thoughts until he could fully grasp their meaning. His world consisted only of this single room in which he dwelled. It was his personal prison and yet also his own sanctuary from the world that could never understand him. From the arms of these walls Ian would never be released. Yet the comfort and understanding they offered him gave him a peace. They gave him the ability to see the outer world as an observer, rather than be caught up in the whirlwind of everyday life.

Ian's room was set up to mirror the place he had always imagined when he was a child as a haven in his mind when things were bad. While others daydreamed of the opposite sex or the future they would lead, Ian dreamed of a place that would finally feel like home in a world which prided itself on constant movement. A vintage tinted window faced the east side of the room allowing the morning's sunlight to flood into the room renewing each day. The window, though small, was just large enough for Ian to perch himself upon the frame and look out over the thriving earth. The wall abutting it held a large mirror. Its rectangle frame stretch over the rust-colored wall and gave the illusion that the room was larger than it really was. Pictures were hung on every free space of the wall. Some were of past memories that Ian had once lived, others were of places he had only visited in his dreams. Each was framed and placed with great care by Ian. These photos were a part of his story, a part of who he was. His desk rested against the far wall with the door next to it. The door always remained

shut, its brass doorknob never touched. While Ian could open the door and leave these four walls behind (where he was certain he would find many more doors which stood ready to swing open providing him new worlds to explore) the worlds beyond their passageways never held anything that would persuade him to give up his own. Ian, unlike so many others, was a man of words, and the message that clung tightly to its wings was the substance with which he built his world. Whatever past had once dictated his life no longer mattered. Only his present course of action remained important.

Pacing the soft carpeted floor while running his fingers over his closely cropped, sandy brown hair, Ian closed his eyes and tried to think. While he was only in his late thirties, the strain of life had left its mark on his face. His loose fitting clothes hung off of his lean muscular frame. Ian's dark brown eyes searched the room intently for an answer to the question turning in his mind. "How can I make them understand?" he said in a near whisper, eyes now clinched shut. "Understand that they live in an illusion, a false reality. The world they believe so strongly in ..." Here Ian stopped. Opening his eyes exposing his disgust, he said firmly, "No not strongly, and that is the problem. What do they care about the truth as long as they make a sizeable profit and an ever increasing income."

His arms dropped to his sides and hung as if being weighed down by a great force. Turning his head towards the window, he let out a sigh returning his features to their state of weariness. The soft golden beams of the dying light flooded into his room and pooled like water upon the floor. Ian reached out his hands to the waning light and let it dance upon his skin, filling his soul with warmth. A child-like smile crossed his face. Looking up at the source, Ian crossed over and released the spring that held the glass-paned window shut. A soft breeze twirled around him once it crossed the threshold into his world. Ian perched himself onto the window frame, resting his head against its wooden surface. Dusk had begun to settle in, and all around the world outside began to prepare for night's arrival.

"We are but sleepers within our world, drifting between the dreams of our soul and the nightmarish realities of our dictating societies," Ian quietly said while gazing out of his window. A light sparkled behind Ian's dark brooding eyes. Quickly he seized up a piece of folded paper and a pen that had been residing in his pocket and began to write feverishly on its blank surface, as if in an oracle's trance, another message for the outside world.

Are you brave enough to hear my words, believe my message, and lay away the previous life that was never your own? What life is worth living if you are not free to dream within your own mind? I see one truth, but you tell me it is a lie. I see cloudless skies overlooking endless plains, but you tell me it is only a painting contrived by

an artist. Is truth only determined by the number of people who believe in it? Or is it a soft spoken voice calling out to your soul, immersing your being with its intoxicating honesty? The later, I believe. For once she grips your heart, your eyes are opened and you view the horizon in a new light.

Ian raised his shaking hand to his lips, the pen still grasped within its clutches. Darkness surrounded him as night finally spread her presence over the world outside of Ian's window. Night's quietness silenced nature, though man defiantly continued to maintain the activities they carried on in the presence of light. Tears pooled into the corners of Ian's eyes waiting for the gates to be lowered just enough for them to pour out onto his cheeks. This was how Ian had lived for the last six years, flashes of immense passionate insight about the world with no one around to listen to him. His therapist had suggested that he begin writing down his thoughts and transform them into a novel. After all, literature was a tool that gave men and women the ability to experience and understand the writer's soul more deeply and profoundly than a simple conversation. Writing was the bridge; through using the correct combination of words it allowed for the writer's passion to be transferred over to the reader. They felt something not from the words themselves, but from the connection they provided.

Ian had taken his therapist's advice to heart. Each day he awoke with the same goal: how to explain his beliefs through writing. How do you transform an idea into a series of words that hold the power to make another feel as they never have before, live a life that others do not believe in? The problem was that so many people already believed they had felt things, when in reality they hadn't even scratched the surface. How could you hear every note of life's symphony when you're caught up only listening to the constant beat of the metronome? How could they live a life of passion, seeking out their own inner-self when continuing the mundane routine of everyday life? For Ian this question had a simple answer. Society had slowly, from our infancy, removed our innate human right to be free. By the age of five, we already have been caught up within the web, full of life's duties, that the thought of ever abandoning it seems unquestionable. In all our years of existence we had learned how to survive, but not how to live.

A noise brought Ian out of his thoughts, yet he was unsure of what he had heard or from where it originated. Looking over at a clock that sat on his desk, he saw that night had almost past. In the early hour, the sky was just beginning to lighten. Searching the room he found nothing disturbed. "It must have been the phone," Ian thought. Standing up, Ian walked over to his desk and placed the receiver to his ear. A calm and confident voice was on the other end. "Ian, this is Dr. Steller. Can you hear me?"

"Yes of course I can," Ian responded slightly aggravated. Why would Dr. Steller be calling him at this hour?



"I see. Are you alone or is someone with you? I can talk to you later if that would be best."

"No, I'm alone. What can I do for you?"

"I just wanted to talk. See how everything is going."

Ian let the phone drop to his hip. His other hand was pressed firmly against his forehead and his square jaw was clinched tightly in frustration. Dr. Steller was just like everyone else, people who couldn't and didn't want to understand. It wasn't that Dr. Steller hadn't helped Ian; it was simply that his advice was taken from another man's ideas, another man's heart. He was void of passion, empty of emotions, and what was worse had no realization of what was absent in his own life. He talked and discussed about things he had never truly felt personally. He constantly believed he had experienced those things which poets speak of as the essence of life, but his soul had never been stirred and the inspiration which bled deep within each line was lost upon him.

Slowly, Ian raised the phone back up to his ear and opened his eyes which had earlier been closed. "How am I?" he asked, his voice steady. "I breathe, I ponder, and I live." Ian grabbed the base of the phone off his desk and began to pace in his room. Around him the room began to alter ever so slightly, as the morning skies drew brighter and his own personal turmoil began to churn. A single tear slid down his cheek and hollowness momentarily settled in the pit of his stomach. Yet as his eyes fell upon the mirror that lay before him his soul stirred and his heart bestowed a peace to banish the doubt. Ian slowly walked before the mirror, and set the base of the phone on the ground beside him. His fingers alighted softly on the glass, reflecting an image before him. He saw what no one else could, what no one else was brave enough to look for. Pressing the phone firmly to his mouth he spoke softly, "What makes a man?"

"I'm sorry Ian. Are you asking me a question?" the voice from the other end asked.

"A fingerprint, a number, a name, perhaps if they have a file tucked away somewhere on you. How is it that we exist only if we can be categorized or added into some computer? Why are we dead in society's eyes if we can't be accounted for? Is that what makes us human?"

"I'm sorry Ian, I'm not sure I understand what you're trying to get at," the voice said. Although the voice was trying to sound concerned, Ian caught a hint of superiority in it.

Tears glistened down Ian's cheeks as he let out a small disbelieving laugh. "We are pawns, you and I, moved about the stage doing only as we are told. They tell us we are free, and so we learn to forget the cage encircling us. They tell us how to live, and

we believe it is the life we chose. They tell us we feel, and we forget we have never been moved, our souls lying dead and withered in our bodies. So I ask you then, what makes a man? For I have never seen this undeterred creature of whom the romantics speak of."

Ian dropped his arm to his side and released the phone from his grasp. As it fell he could hear the voice from the other end call out, but the voice seemed to grow weaker until he could no longer hear its response. The phone lay sprawled upon the ground with its chord wrapped all around itself in a knot. Ian continued to stare into the mirror as he regained his composure and wiped the tears away. The early morning produced shadows that danced upon his face, changing his image like masks being tried on and then removed. To any observer, it would seem as though with each new face came a new persona: anger, happiness, worry. But Ian saw past the image being projected upon him by the outer world, the world beyond his four corners and single window. He saw deep into his eyes and down into the dark recesses of his own mind, to a place where no outside force could touch or alter, a place created and transformed only by him. Whatever mask was forced upon his face, his eyes still told him what lied beneath; a truth which no lie, regardless of the general consensus, could deter.

Morning's coldness draped around him like a blanket drawing his body to a state of numbness. The rosy sky told him of the days he would have to face and the tomorrows which would continue to come without pause. He realized with the brightening of light, that he could never know peace until he could forget the world beyond his window, the world that controlled mankind without them ever realizing it. Beyond his window was a place of servitude, whether blatant or dressed up in costume, and he would no longer be a part of it. Quietly Ian walked solemnly to his window and curled up within the wooden arms of its frame. Moments passed as he sat staring out at this other world. The sky lit on fire as radiant beams shot up from the earth's glistening body. The intense beauty of all that Ian saw moved him beyond words. Yet these moments lasted for only a few minutes before its beauty began to fade and the serenity of nature transformed into man's canvas. Man-painted steel buildings and paved roads replaced the once simple landscape. People began to move about, too driven by the laws of society to have noticed the raw beauty moments before. These moments passed before their eyes and were lost to them for all eternity.

Shaking his head sadly Ian thought, "It is like when one blows out his breath in the cold morning fog. Their souls depart and their environment hides their loss from them. They have lost all that made them who they were and never even realized it."

Ian continued to watch as the sun rose, never removing his eyes from the picture of the outside world framed within his window. At last, as all of the morning light was

exposed, he let out a single tear. "We are all slaves to our environment," Ian said quietly. "What makes us free is when our minds are liberated."

From behind him, he heard the turning of the brass doorknob. Sadness gripped his heart and the inevitable sound of the door sliding across the floor rung in his ears. Yet still he refused to look behind him. He wanted to hold on for just one more moment. Closing his eyes, he remembered what it was he believed and the truth that clung to his heart. In a voice full of longing, Ian quietly said, "What dreams I have dreamt that shall never be seen by the light of day."

With his eyes still pressed shut, Ian reached out for the smooth surface of the glass. His fingers alighted instead on a cold hard metal bar. Caught off guard, Ian's eyes flung open in surprise. Before him, rusty grey bars lined the once free window. All around him the room began to fade and transform into a cold empty cell. Before his fearful eyes the rust-colored paint melted from the walls. His framed pictures, which held within them the essence of each past memory, withered as if put to a flame and turned to ash. The antique furniture disappeared into the shadows that lingered in the corners of the room. Only his mirror remained, though the reason for its presence now was altered. No longer did it hang to remind Ian of a truth that others could not see, but rather it loomed before him, a spy, showing viewers on the other side every move of the cell's occupant. Ian's face twisted in surprise and his mouth stood agape as he turned to see Dr. Steller pushing open the door. Behind him, lingering in the entrance, stood a nurse. Upon viewing Ian's ridged body, hands grasping fistfuls of paper, and a look of recognition in his eyes, Dr. Steller said with a smile on his face, "Well I'm glad to see you are lucid this morning Ian." Turning back to look at the nurse, Dr. Steller explained, "Ian suffers from several debilitating mental illnesses. I stopped by earlier this morning on my first round through the hospital, but he was suffering from hallucinations and was unable to answer my questions." Turning back to look at Ian, he continued to explain. "Ian's condition is not an untreatable one. With the right medication he could easily re-enter our society. But unfortunately, Ian refuses all help and medication." The nurse's brown curls swayed as she shook her head in response. Dr. Steller, in an attempt to emphasize how much he cared, smiled sadly.

Ian stared into both of their faces with disgust. Oh yes, his world was different now. People pretending they feel something when instead all they responded to was the lack of an emotion. Dr. Steller didn't feel sorry for him, if anything he felt contempt. "Yes," Ian said in a low voice, "and did he tell you what that medication does to you? No, well let me tell you. It takes away your ability to feel, to think. It makes you be just another cookie-cut image of everyone else." Ian gave Dr. Steller a look of disdain. "Why would I trade how I feel for another's life? Whose emotional highs cannot reach the heavens and whose lows do not even penetrate the earth. Rather they stay in a

constant state never deterring from the mean. My dreams and my emotions may be my own curse, continually tossing me between heaven and hell, but at least I have felt them. I have slipped between those realms while you have refused the possibility."

Dr. Steller just shook his head, acting out the role of a sympathetic friend. Continuing, as if Ian had never spoken, he quietly told the nurse, "The reality in our society is that he really is mad. However the reality in his own world..." He paused and tapped his head. "...is that he is the only one free. If we can manage to get rid of 'his world' then he should be able to get better. The family has given us permission to try an experimental shock procedure since Ian refuses all medication. If the process works, it should allow for Ian to enter society again."

The color drained from Ian's face as he stood there, his body shaking in both shock and anger. His voice escaped his throat with a growl. "What right have I," he yelled, "to live in any other world than the one which I have constructed?" Looking over at his window, he hissed, "That world which lies beyond this window was created and is dictated by others. It holds no place for me. It does not know me, nor I it.

"You think it is these bars which restrain me from escaping my reality and joining yours?" he asked, one hand wrapped around a bar, the other pressed against his forehead. "Who is the fool? The man who is free in the small rooms of his consciousness or the man enslaved to a world confined by the rules and ideals of tyrannical wolves? The second man lives his worthless life prostrating himself to the image others project upon him.

"This window is the portal between both our worlds, and which world with its inhabitants seem more lucid, right, or free is only determined by which way you're looking in.

"The truth, the real truth and not the social image it is contrived from, is that you want to be enslaved. You willingly give your identity and free will to the highest bidder." Ian stared furiously at Dr. Steller. Suddenly, Ian's voiced steadied and he raised himself up before them, his undeterred presence towering over them. "And so you do not have the right to criticize or judge me, who is still a man. For I am more liberated standing here before these enclosing bars, than you are standing before the roaring waves beating their fist upon sandy shores."

Dr. Steller's eyes were seething, but the rest of his face remained frozen in nonchalant way. Still facing Ian he commented to the nurse, "You see why he is in here now. Clearly he is delusional. Please go get the men to assist you with the restraints and gurney. We should begin the process as soon as possible."

The nurse turned slowly hesitating at the door, but after a pause left to fulfill Dr.



Steller's command. Still starring at Ian, Dr. Steller quietly spoke. "The world does not recognize passion. In our society it is an uncontrollable risk that cannot be squelched once it starts to burn. Instead we satisfy our thirst with only the idea of emotions. The belief that you have felt something is just as good as actually experiencing it." Dr. Steller crossed the room standing directly in front of Ian's face. His breath oozed heat as he whispered in Ian's ear, "A lie is only a lie when we acknowledge it as such."

Cocking his head to the side, Ian calmly whispered in reply, "That is why you will never truly know what it is to live. Life doesn't change to concur with whatever definition you've decided to label her with. Society's use of manipulating words doesn't alter the truth. It just makes it harder to discover for those who are willing to seek her out. But you may take away from me this knowledge: the longer it takes to discover her, the more intensity of emotion we feel when we finally find her."

Dr. Steller glared at Ian and moved back towards the door. "We'll see how you feel after this procedure."

But Ian no longer heard Dr. Steller. Closing his eyes, the darkness once again swept across his mind, and Dr. Steller's image was erased before Ian's eyes. For Ian's soul subdued his mind and granted him the peace found within his own world forever.



*Philip Smith*



Pigeon Stairs

*Stacy Smith*

# A Murder of Crows

*Susan Firghil Park*

*for my mother Aileen Rachel Cowan*

1.

"My mother died at 5:00 today,"  
I say, hear words, eerie, echo  
on the line: died . . . today. Dear body, glow  
now: phosphorescent death encased

in lingering spirit's vial. I still can feel  
your hand's fierce clench, still see  
your blackbird eyes  
fastened on mine. Somewhere you are dialing

one number over and over to hear  
again green arias of love. Here

find a door, this final corps of sound:  
driven bitten words, shattered shrouds,

ghosts of loss worn like tattered feathers  
from a dead crow, while the wild ones gather.

## Paradisiacal Citrus

*Kim Hazel*

She wears a pink grapefruit atop her head  
believing it makes her that much better.  
Bitter juices trickle into yolk eyes  
and blind.

Years of acidic outlook  
create defenses that are never removed  
errant messages to her pink heart  
black brain.

Ruthie, Ruthie  
please wake from there.  
Who is this part who put it there?  
Who balances the crown fruit?  
Ruth runs from the apples  
the devil's food.

Bananas come from lands  
where skins are slick and black  
swollen mouths and tongues.

No, she is very pink  
thank you very much!  
And work she does to be this smart  
to see so clear  
to feel the ghost  
sink and breath  
within her chest.

"No, fool!" She cannot dance  
for surely she'll knock  
the sticky, yellow ball  
to the terracotta tiles.

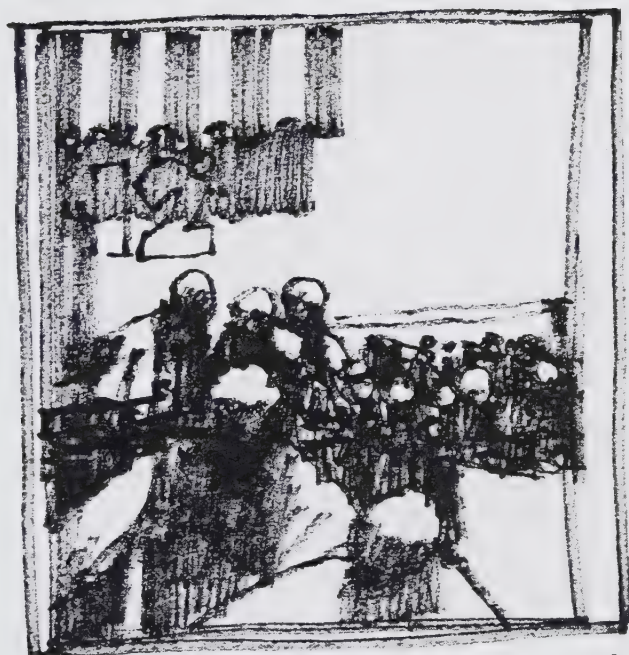
She promises the grapefruit's survival,  
and with punishments known  
she promotes rotting flesh.

Sinking one talent,  
her piano plays only  
the grapefruit songs.

She gives from her purse;  
pays for missing citrus



to learn the bitter sweet life  
of a grapefruit wearer.  
In the afterlife she will reach for the fruit  
will partake of her crown  
without sugar  
at God's icy table.  
He most likes  
above the figs  
pomegranates,  
bananas, coconuts  
and kiwis,  
a life's worth of sacrifices  
wrapped in the ruby-red flesh  
forever.



*Philip Smith*

## Steel Meal

*Kim Hazel*

Shrinking back from life  
I fear  
And a very real  
Panic  
Prevents me from  
living

Deflated, defeated dreams  
reside here in the mill.  
Despite life  
I dare not move  
against the grain  
of hope.

Days of hot  
iron-ore burning bright  
my light trapped  
in rigid cold steel  
the unimaginable  
the unmovable  
I drive each day to hell

Ingots dropped by those  
high above me  
to avoid this kind of low.

Cesspool baths of foot-wash  
I find respite  
in fifties-tiled showers  
where we treat one another  
like the predatory  
animals we've become.

Nothing is worse than the realization  
that you feel safest amongst  
molten ditches

heart guarded  
behind iron aprons  
I drown my soul in Lord Calvert  
sipped from a Suave bottle

Beyond the world's reach  
the most I can muster is anger  
when the contract fails.  
Fuck him and fuck me  
when your pretty young wife  
decides to cheat  
on your week of graves.

Bury me here  
I cry to the guys  
and we shake our heads in unison  
eating the scraps from our  
black boxes.

## Crossing a Range (Twice)

*Luc Fenix*

*It is a long trip...to those elevations—too long, really, for so short a visit.*

Thomas Mann

I walk down the rainy street in the twilight. The cold wind blows carrying litter from one side of the street to the other and back again. Remnants of roofing, large shards of glass and long crumpled pieces of metal remaining from last week's storm, too large to be moved by this slight wind, rattle and scrape the concrete as if they want to fly again. I get in the car to begin the drive to the airport for my midnight flight. The main road is closed—washed out by post-storm mud slides. A thick covering of mud, trees, debris, even a house slid from its foundation's bluff perch, make it impassable. The normally two hour ride will stretch to four along partially washed out secondary roads. The recent disaster over, I am confident that my trip will be uneventful, with the probability of another disaster statistically small. I recall several events from the recent past that cause me concern. In early September of 2001, I visited the observation deck atop one of the two tallest buildings in New York. A week later I returned home to hear of a world on fire no one saw coming. In late December of 2004, I sailed through the Gulf of Thailand on a small boat. In the evening, I docked on an Island to hear of a world devastated by a wave no one saw coming. I feel quite confident that this journey will be perfectly safe. I have just been through a natural disaster. The chances of another, natural or man-made, must be negligent. With full confidence, I press my foot deeply into the accelerator and speed through dark of night like an appointed courier.

The usual crossing of the wet, foggy range is punctuated by numerous vertical rises and descents over the low mountains. The alternate route, although no less curvy, is much flatter as it more closely follows the path of the mighty river. The two lane road is narrow, often shoulderless, but wide enough for two large log trucks to comfortably pass, except perhaps at a few sharp turns. The road is devoid of all signs of activity. Not even another car passes. The tires screech as I take the turns all too fast and without fear. On this route, I cannot discuss the physical or psychological changes brought about by crossing a natural barrier through an artificial passage from marine environment to fertile inland valley. I can, however, formulate a metaphysical discourse on traversing a small, built arterial following the course of a majestic waterway while imperceptibly passing between these same marine and inland ecosystems. There is a certain magic, in the most vague sense of the word, in the converging and diverging of these different natural and man-made systems, all occurring within a small spatial area and without clearly defined boundaries. It is a place where uncountable forms of life



spring into and out of death.

The two flights are unremarkable. During the few hours between flights that I spend in the Houston Airport, my intended rest is often disturbed by the repeated announcement that certain jokes or inappropriate remarks may lead to arrest. I ponder how such a state of affairs could come to pass, especially in Texas, the land of the free spirited Cowboy. But then, cowboys are not particularly known for their sense of humor, except the Jewish ones and perhaps the Italian ones (but not intentionally). I question whether this really is Texas. After all, an airport is simply a portal into, out of, or through a place. If, for example, I stop for a few minutes, or even a few hours, to change planes in Honolulu or Tokyo or Reykjavik, am I justified in saying that I have been to those cities? What if I don't leave the plane, or only set foot in the airport? Or what if I decide to briefly leave the airport in, say, Honolulu and set foot on a Hawaiian road? What if I reach down and touch Hawaiian sand? Can I then say I have been to Hawaii? All of this must have been before 2001. Now in the time of illegal airport jokes, it is unlikely I could depart and re-enter security in the short time between flights. I gladly leave Texas, unenthused about asserting my right of having set foot in this great state. In less time than I have been undecidedly on Texas soil, I am decidedly on Costa Rican soil. The ride from Liberia to the Pacific Coast is less than uneventful.

Daniel Oduber Quiros International Airport, no more than an open air shed covered with a corrugated metal roof to keep the sun out, with a few patches of thatch, here and there, to provide native authenticity, presents no obstacle to entry. A customs official, guard and baggage inspector, all rolled into one person, glances at my passport, pausing for a moment at the Thai stamp to admire it's graphic qualities, quickly waves me through. And no wonder, since the Thai stamp forms a right isosceles triangle, right angle pointing up with text demarking a perfect border on all sides, whereas the Costa Rican stamp is a loosely implied rectangle formed by several lines of text with no well-defined border. Presumably, no, or at most little, conclusion can be drawn about a country's attributes, or the qualities of it's people, from the shape of it's passport stamp. Or perhaps distinct conclusions can be drawn, but that is the scope of a different excursus.

From Liberia to the coast of Guanacaste there is but one road, Highway 21, and it is in better repair than most other roads here. It's two narrow lanes split to pass over the gorge formed by the Rio Tempisque via the twin spans of the recently completed Friendship Bridge. The narrow decks of the bridge, supported by arched steel trusses, barely permit the passage of wide trucks. The problem is that the eastbound span is closed for repair so that all traffic is being funneled, alternating between east and west, over the westbound span. Sitting in barely moving traffic backed up for miles in the

sweltering heat, I am not yet aware of this. The driver inches ahead a few feet, stops the car, tightly pulling the parking brake, gets out to survey the situation, rushes back to release the brake and roll the car ahead a few more feet to stay within inches of the car ahead and again tightly engages the parking brake. This pattern repeats for several hours. All the while, vehicles try to cheat ahead by driving along the rugged grass shoulder to the right of the lane, or even in the left lane dodging the sporadic oncoming traffic. The driver keeps mumbling, "This is not allowed, this is not good," as the errant cars and trucks pass on left and right forming bottlenecks up ahead, further slowing down the flow of traffic. Even here, everybody is in a rush. Busses unload and people walk. Police walk up and down the highway surveying the situation but, apparently, do not notice the illegally passing cars. A few trucks get stuck in the grass. The drivers turn off their engines and go sit under the trees. My driver seems pleased with this. Eventually, we cross the bridge and westbound traffic soon returns to normal, although interrupted by not infrequent swerving to avoid eastbound cars skirting ahead in the westbound lane.

The road winds its way through the rainforest crossing a small coastal range dividing the interior from the sea. The forest penetrates right up to the slim shoulder thick with lush growth, palms, buttressed trees, banana trees, vines and undergrowth, pierced here and there by looming solitary guanacaste trees, their ancient gnarly branches reaching out and up above all else displaying their many leafless medusa fingers against the quiet blue sky. The shoulders, barely a few feet wide, form parallel linear micro-habitats on both sides of the highway. Dogs, many dogs, walking, sitting, sleeping—sometimes with paws or long, bare, rat-like tails extending into the roadway with no fear of being run over. This fearlessness is well justified as the cars, even excessively speeding ones, invariably swerve to avoid canine contact. Iguanas, alternatively darting with uncanny reptilian speed when unconcerned and stone still when leery of their surroundings, apparently unaware that their bark-like skin does not provide the intended camouflage on the dirt shoulder. And, of course, people, many people. Walking people, sitting people, bicycling people, mopeding people, sleeping people, eating people, talking people, waving people, yelling people, playing people. All this activity in the dusty shoulder (even this wet world is dusty in the dry season) is unphased by the many cars whizzing by at reckless speeds. It is all a dance of finely tuned moves, like a Broadway Boogie-Woogie—a spontaneously choreographed ballet of cars and pedestrians passing paper thin close to each other in all directions without ever actually touching (although impressing upon each other the tactile effects of air pressure).

The driver, trying to make up for lost time, even though I insist I am not in a hurry, races around the curves, up and down the hills. More than once, an iguana is sent

scurrying, a dog rolls quickly out of the way, or a bicyclist swerves away from the road. All this without much notice, as if it is just the normal course of things. This is the second coastal range that I have crossed within twenty-four hours: one away from the North American Pacific, one toward the Central American Pacific. These mountains, if one can call them that being not much more than foothills, make up for their lack of height with their voluminous mystique. They are indeed magic. Not magic in the sense of the holy Mt. Athos in northern Greece, home to a great many black robed, long bearded orthodox monks sharing rocky trails with male goats, nor in the mythical way of ancient Olympus. Not in the biblical realm of Abraham's Mt. Moriah, whose red rocks inspired existential ramblings of Kierkegaard, nor in the symbolic sense of Brocken where Faust joins in the delights of the Witches' Sabbath. They spring from the temperate or tropical regions, but, unlike the rugged peaks of the Rockies or the Andes, do not inspire fear. Nor do they inspire novels or paintings as the awesome Kilimanjaro or Fuji. They have not the all-too-human complexity of the Alps or the ultra-surreal timelessness of the Himalayas.

All these attributes they do not have, I realize as we speed unnervingly through them, yet all these things they are. They are the border between coast and valley, the passageway between seascape and landscape, a place formed by nature and man, a place of life and death. A place, one might say, if one wanted to be obtusely pretentious, whose Apollonian and Dionysiac principles merge, where the forces of creation and destruction converge and diverge. But such a line of reasoning is better left to a treatise on post-Nietzschean monotonous topography, or perhaps to a short essay on the "Geistlessness in the Geist of Hans Castorp in Thomas Mann's Magic Mountain."

This line of reasoning could easily have continued for many minutes more had I not become acutely aware of substantial deceleration. I have perhaps failed to mention that the road has a number of small bridge crossings, a number certainly more than a few, even if less than uncountably many. However, since I have not counted them, they shall remain countable but uncounted—like the number of birds in a flock that moves overhead proving to some, by the fact there is a very definite, although unknown, number, the existence of God. I do not apply the argument to the number of bridges, but will note that the bridges all narrow the road to one lane. I presume this was done to save on the cost of construction rather than test driving skills. However, the benefit of the former has long been realized while the effect of the later lives on. The bridges are all preceded in both directions by two yellow warning signs. One displays the word "Puente Angosto," which at first I thought meant a bridge named "Angosto." After passing many such signs, I quickly realized it was unlikely all the

bridges had the same name and reformulated my interpretation to mean “narrow bridge,” which still, in a sense, gives all the bridges the same name. The second yellow diamond simply displays the single word *Despacio*. Although, this word literally means “slow,” it is apparently a coded message that means “drive as fast as possible to cross the bridge before it collapses, or at least before the oncoming car does.” The car scrapes one side along the metal guardrail of the bridge, audibly planing paint off the fenders, until coming to a halt in the brush past the end of the bridge. Pulling myself out the smashed window, I see the occupants of the pickup truck across the road have not fared as well. The truck sits perpendicular to the road, what little left of the front end crunched into the bank of lush green. On the road lay two women and a small child. The women, although bloodied and screaming, are moving. The child is not. Cars are once again backed up for miles in both directions. Police arrive, and two ambulances. The bodies are removed, the road is cleared, the traffic continues on, the dogs walk away along the shoulder, the iguanas emerge. The rhythms of the forest, visible along the edges of the road, are unchanged. Time continues on. Is it linear or is it circular? Is it finite or is it infinite? Does it have a direction? I continue driving west, eventually emerging from the forest, where one does not ask about a meaning beyond life, to the sight of the big sea. The sea whose waves beat their rhythm right up against the forest. One could easily ponder the physical cause of the waves: The attractive pull of the moon’s gravity tugging the earth’s mass through these waters, the effects of the resulting tides, the relationship of the waves to the wind or the deep upward flowing geothermal columns, the sinusoidal mathematics of their form. Or one could, just as easily, ponder the many metaphysical manifestations of the waves: their place as one of the fundamental metaphors, their marking of time—both linear and cyclic, their evocations of the spirits of the sea, their representation of the difference between time and eternity.

I could easily examine all these lines of reasoning concerning waves. But, I just listen to them (as the child never will).





Bird of Solitude

*Angela Baumgartner*

“The problems of our time are political, ecological, economic—but their solutions are cultural.

How do people speak their truth? How do we listen eloquently? If communication is the fundamental alternative to violence and injustice, what is the work of each voice among us?”

“We live in a world where a few people could destroy us all, but a few people cannot save us. The math doesn’t work that way. We can only be saved when many people—and finally all people—recognize and live by our true interdependence on earth. This means that education, interactive culture, and the expressive arts are the greatest priority of our time. ... Writers have a place in this essential work—to question, listen, and tell the connecting stories of human experience, the quiet voices of local life everywhere.”

Kim Stafford, Director, Northwest Writing Institute

Lewis and Clark College, Portland, Oregon



# Having Everything Right

## A Project in Eloquent Listening

Clatsop Community College Arts and Letters Faculty and Students  
present a series of events with special guest Oregon writer

### Kim Stafford

#### **Monday, 4 February 2008**

**2:00 pm: Coastal Natural History Center  
(Seaside, Oregon)**

Join Kim Stafford, Seaside High and Broadway  
Middle School students, Rich Trucke, and Neal  
Maine, Executive Director of the North Coast  
Land Conservancy.

**4:00 pm: Ecila State Park  
(Cannon Beach, Oregon)**

Poduck hosted by the Cannon Beach Chamber  
of Commerce. Join Architect Jay Raskin and  
Mark Knutson. Stories of Place by Cannon  
Beach visual artists, writers, and stewards.

**7:00 pm: Cannon Beach Chamber of  
Commerce (Cannon Beach, Oregon)**

Greetings by Peter Lindsey. Public reading by  
Kim Stafford.

#### **Tuesday, 5 February 2008**

**10:00 am: River Theatre (Astoria, Oregon)**

A Conversation with Robert Adams and Kim  
Stafford moderated by Stephen Forrester, Editor  
of the Daily Astorian.

**2:30 pm: River Beach, Fort Stevens State  
Park (Warrenton, Oregon)**

Meet for caravan at Clatsop Community College  
Art Center at 2:00 pm or come to the beach.  
Greetings by Peter Huhtala. We will build a  
shelter out of the storm driftwood.

**6:00 pm: Clatsop Community College Art  
Gallery (Astoria, Oregon)**

"The Muses Among Us," Faculty Art Show  
Reception. Join Richard Rowland, Royal  
Nebecker, Knutson Shauck, David Lee Myers,  
Carol Knutson, Nancy Cook, Lucien Swerdloff,  
Bill Antilla, Sonja May, Teri Sund.

#### **Wednesday, 6 February 2008**

**8:00 am: MERTS Campus Dock  
(Astoria, Oregon)**

Sail on the M/V Forerunner across the Columbia  
River to Fort Columbia, Washington. Call  
Nancy Cook at (503)791-1514 to make a  
reservation.

**10:00 am: Fort Columbia State Park  
(Chinook, Washington)**

Join Chinook Tribal Elder Ray Gardiner,  
Richard Rowland, Robert Michael Pyle and  
David Campiche.

**11:30 am: Fort Columbia State Park  
(Chinook, Washington)**

Closing Ceremony.

Calling denizens, dwellers, locals, workers, lovers, elders, youngsters, shamans, resident stewards, writers, artists, storytellers and eloquent listeners.  
For more information contact Richard Rowland at (503)338-2449 or rowland@clatsopcc.edu, or Carol Knutson at cknutson@clatsopcc.edu.  
All events are free and open to the public.

*The Greatest Ownership of All is to Look Around and Understand*



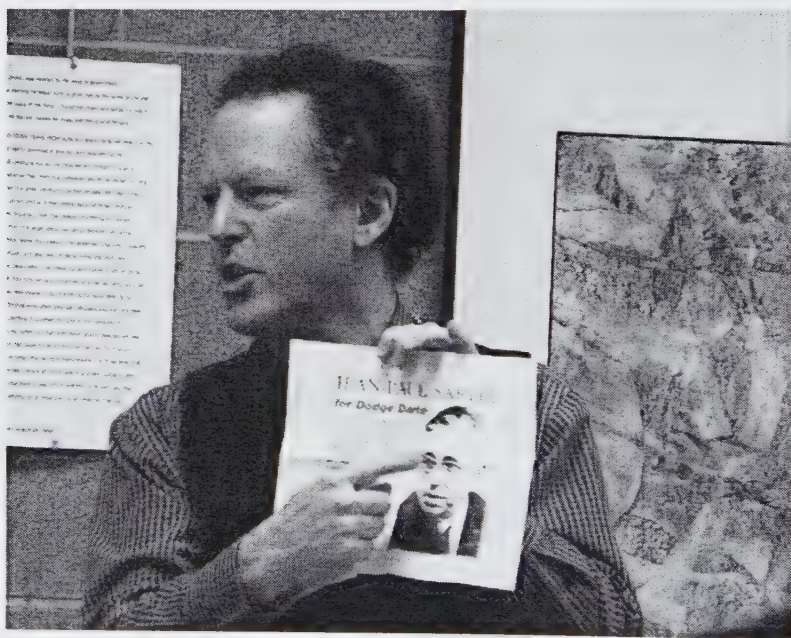
poster by Lucien Swerdloff - photo by David Lee Myers

## *Kim Stafford* The Creative Life

The news is hard weather: hunger, cruelty, war.  
And we are busy making art: line, shade, color  
to temper the tyrant in ourselves, to give anger  
a song, smuggle dance beat into film, feed sorrow  
to damp paper, embed delight in photo silver,  
mark the fingerprint of vision on the living.

Lucky vocation this, and a tough calling now:  
where spirit falters, vision fades, we will be diplomats  
from the human home country of the creative life  
with vibrant news made by hand.

*Written in an e-mail to Richard Rowland - November 2007*



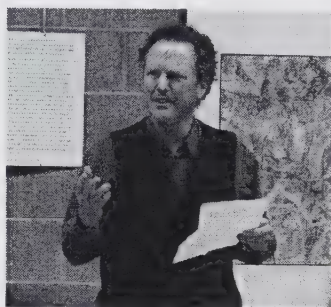
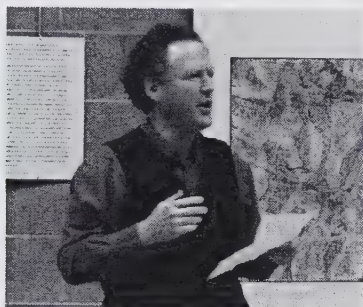
*Kim Stafford at the CCC Art Gallery - photo by Caitlin Wright*



## Having Everything Right

Originally published in *Having Everything Right* (Sasquatch 1997). Reprinted by permission of the author.

I want to live in that place by water the Kwakiutl call, in the Boas transcription, he'lade. ... This name means "Having Everything Right". It is a place where people gather abundant berries and make good life. From that gathering, they gain time at "Place of Meeting One Another in Winter," to dance and trade stories. Berries by summer, stories by winter, round and round. "Having Everything Right" is a portable name, an expandable place. It could be what we call Earth. But it will not, unless we sift from our habits the nourishing ways: listening, remembering, telling, weaving a rooted companionship with home ground.



photos by Caitlin Wright

## A Life of Art in a Busy World

Originally published in *The Muses Among Us* (U of Georgia 2003). Reprinted by permission of the author.

Could my writing be the river that winds through the obstacles of my life, flowing in its own way, without conflict, so sure of its own relation to gravity that it unfurls its long story past clock and meal, past child and loving wife, inquiring gently through dream and waking, flowing undisturbed and undisturbing past the mailbox, curling and eddying softly past the edges of deadline and annual report, suffusing budget and application and prospectus, carrying little rafts of poetry and barges of prose gracefully through the channel deepened by fear and scoured by grief, urging my intention effortlessly through thickets of disbelief, mildly passing no and yes and maybe on its journey to lower and lower ground, moving easily, flooding with clear water and light the lowest reaches I can find, without any destination but down, without any intention but vital motion through, without any agenda but inclusion, buoyancy, permission, carrying the living scent of one place to the hunger of another, flowing nameless and pure, eager, without ambition, disguised as the world itself traveling through the world?

# Stewards of the Land and Sea

*David Plechl*

Reprinted with permission from *The Daily Astorian*, of Astoria, Oregon

Northwest author Kim Stafford came to the mouth of the Columbia to speak. He also came to listen. In many ways, he is a man that has spent a lifetime listening.

The younger Stafford inherited from his father a profound sense of place and curiosity. William Stafford was one of the West's most notable and prolific poets. He published more than 65 volumes of poetry and prose in his lifetime, and influenced a generation of writers.

Kim Stafford has taught writing at Lewis and Clark College since 1979, and is the founder of the Northwest Writing Institute. His own stories and poems often balance wide-eyed fascination with nature's tenuous beauty with a keen awareness of our human impact upon it.

Stafford was invited to be the guest of honor, or the Elegant Listener, at a three-day series of conversations and readings at several locations along the river and coastline Monday through Wednesday, Feb. 4 through 6. "Having Everything Right: A Project in Elegant Listening" is a collaboration of the Clatsop Community College Art Department and the community of artists, conservationists and thinkers within our midst.



Kim Stafford with listeners at River Beach, Fort Stevens - photo by Kate Lyons

Organizers and participants hope to stimulate, inspire and increase awareness of the natural environment, as well as strengthen local ties of community and collaboration.

"We have always had a relation to the natural world," says Stafford. "For a time there was so much abundance we did not need to think about anything but our own survival. That time has passed, and now the natural world is hostage to our slowly developing wisdom."

Stafford says "wisdom" because it's really our own cunningly rendered technologies that have brought us to this critical tipping point in the balance of our relationship with the land and sea.

Moving forward, he says, might mean gazing back to the Native American practice of making decisions based on what is best for the seventh generation.

"This is no longer a quaint idea, a luxury," says Stafford. "This has become a very practical idea. Each decision we make will need to be answered in the context of long-term good, far beyond our individual lives."

### **Memory is the connection: Richard Rowland**

Richard Rowland is the North Coast ceramic artist best known for his Dragon Kiln, a wood-fired, earth-bound beauty that has become as much an institution as a ceremony that connects the past with the present.

It's all about making connections between the local and the regional, says Rowland, "between the stories of our friends and the stories of our ancestors."

Rowland reflects on a time when art, culture, survival and one's place in the environment were all part of the same tapestry, a story woven by artisans, elders and seers.

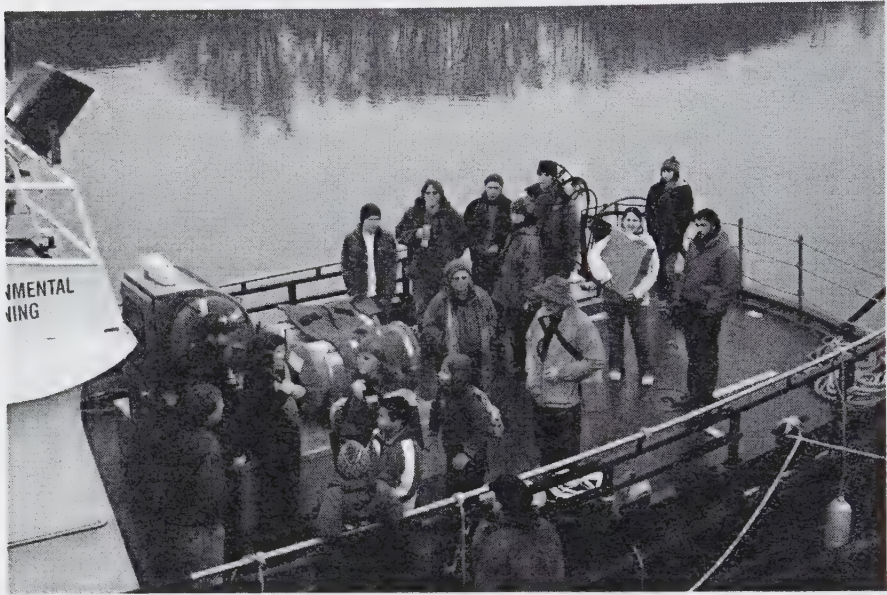
"All through the history of art-making there were responsibilities assumed by the artist," explains Rowland, "in the the aboriginal dreamtime, telling people where to go, how to map the world, and on and on. In our own time, you could say we're on the brink of destroying diversity in our home. So how do we address the issue of being an artist?"

Rowland has a few ideas. Know your neighbors. Don't sell out. Keep fighting, and stay involved. This spirit of responsibility pushed Rowland toward his work with the Comanche peoples. It pushed him into teaching. It pushed him to bring Stafford to the sea.

"Memory is the connection between our roots and contemporary life," says Rowland.



"In remembering, one gains clarity on how to move forward."



Passengers on the MV Forerunner - photo by Kate Lyons

### **Very like war: Robert Adams**

Robert Adams photographs so that he and others will never forget. He has been documenting the West for 40 years, and is credited with seeding an entire movement in a new kind of landscape photography that avoids romantic and sentimental images in favor of more critical pictures that sometimes draw their power from a sense of dread or despair.

From 1999 to 2004, Adams focused his cameras almost entirely on the impact of Northwest clearcuts. The work culminated in a book, "Turning Back," and a body of work that has exhibited at galleries in New York, San Francisco and now in Paris at the Cartier Foundation.

Interestingly enough, despite the art-world acclaim, Adams isn't sure the term "art" best defines this body of work.

"The most important job of art is to reconcile us to life, to help us accept it, and say yes to it, and love it. The photography that I did in the remains of the woods here by that definition, is not art," says Adams. "It's closer to something like combat photography. It's a record of grief, frankly."



Adams does not take the analogy to combat lightly. He says that clearcutting is “very like war.”

“That’s my impression. The appearance, the desolation, the sense that there is no future,” explains Adams, “that you’ve been broken away from continuity with your forbearers. All of this is there to be walked through, if anybody wants to. Nobody wants to.”

Adams wanted to, and did. And yet in all his walks, he never encountered families or children. He thinks he knows why.

“It is a lesson you do not want to hand off to your children, about human nature, about the way you view caring for them,” he says. “I don’t believe the constant lingo here, to refer to the cutting of trees as a crop. The implication is that it will keep growing like wheat, or something. There is ample evidence to suggest, that if you look at it historically, that is not going to happen.”

At its best, Adams says, photography can be both critical and hopeful at once, and it can, “create a sense of place, and caring for space.” He brings to mind the photographs Lewis Hines made of child laborers in United States factories in the early 1900s that brought reform.

“What Hines said he wanted to do,” explains Adams, “was to ‘point out what was wrong, so that we would want to change it, and what was right, so that we would value it.’ Every once in while, life lets you do that.”

### **He wouldn’t eat them: Peter Huhtala**

“I’ve sort of come to environmentalism, activism and the science of all this in a more natural way,” says Peter Huhtala, lead policy advisor for the Pacific Marine Conservation Council, a nonprofit focused on marine conservation.

Huhtala’s grandfather arrived in Astoria in 1900 from Finland. He was a seining gillnetter on a butterfly boat and could taper a wooden mast by hand with an adze. Huhtala speaks fondly of his grandfather’s “inner eye” for an artful, functional line. He also remembers a turn in his grandfather’s relationship with the river that gave him his livelihood.

“He took me fishing a lot, salmon, sturgeon sometimes,” explains Huhtala, “but in the late ‘60s, my grandfather really didn’t want to go fishing anymore. He wouldn’t eat them. He believed that they were polluted.”

In the ‘60s and ‘70s, pulp mills were less regulated than they are now. Commercial fisherman were pulling up nets of dead fish along with the occasional slew of toxic

sludge. They organized, went to Congress and pushed for cleaner water standards.

"There was overwhelming demand at the time," says Huhtala, and overwhelming success, as a series of tough environmental protection acts were implemented.

"But we ended by with a different problem altogether, which we're still living with today," says Huhtala. "That's the legacy of the chemical industry."



Peter Huhtala at River Beach - photo by Kate Lyons

Years after it was first introduced, then banned, DDT still persists in the environment.

"It makes its way from the farms where it was used in the Yakima Valley or the Portland metro area, and it ends up settling along the shallows of the Columbia River and in the fine sediment, and more broadly in the estuary," says Huhtala.

Levels of DDT are so excessive, in fact, that dredged material must be removed from the river. Among other things, the river has caught a fever, a problem that could grow worse through global warming.

"It doesn't take much increase in temperature to push some of these salmon populations toward (extinction)."

Though threats to the fish and river are many, Huhtala does see hope in the communities that depend on and value the wealth of our ocean and waterways.

Huhtala has been working with the fishing community of Port Orford, Wash., to create marine reserves where fishing is restricted, all in an effort to ensure healthy fish runs.

"They're taking it upon themselves, because they see the value," says Huhtala.

### **The river is telling us: Ray Gardner**

When Chinook tribal elder Ray Gardner gazes upon Saddle Mountain, he sees more than a beautiful vista. He sees the birthplace of his people, and recalls the creation story that brought a proud nation to a mighty river.

When someone says Fort Columbia, Gardner thinks Scarborough Hill. To the Native American perspective, history always gazes back farther. Scarborough Hill, he remembers, was central to the survival of the Chinook.

A slight cut in the rocky outcropping made it possible for canoes to enter a narrow cove and disappear completely—the perfect place to weather a fierce storm or elude an attacker.

The vantage from the high rocks gave the Chinook a strategic view of the river and those who sought to enter.



Ray Gardner at Fort Columbia - photo by Sunny Cook

"That location is very important and sacred to us," Gardner says.

The Chinook were great traders and controlled all goods that entered the Columbia. In fact, a savvy trader hawking pelts along the Mississippi might be overheard speaking a bit of “Chinook jargon,” a trade language that filtered through the range of the tribe’s area of influence.

The Chinook traded with Capt. Robert Gray and the first settlers and explorers that arrived. Back then, the forests teemed with game, and the river flowed rich with runs of salmon that sustained an entire people through countless winters.

These days, Gardner says, we face water quality and other environmental issues. Steelhead and salmon runs are threatened. Too much waste and chemical byproduct still ends up in the river.

The way forward, he says, is to listen. Our neighbors and elders, through their stories and memories, hold the key to a new abundance. Even the river itself has a story to tell.

“The Creator and Mother Nature are telling us every day what we need to do,” says Gardner. “Unfortunately, in today’s hectic lifestyle many of us have not slowed down to listen. The river is telling us what it needs.”

### **The way ahead: Kim Stafford**

In “Early Morning,” the book Kim Stafford wrote about his late father’s life, he recalls a certain lesson from his childhood.

The family traveled often, and Stafford’s parents would often tell the children, “Don’t forget to talk to strangers.”

Without the knowledge of a stranger, how could a child get help, meet a friend, or come to understand the interconnectedness of the world around them?

Stafford also remembers a lesson from when he worked an oral history project along the Oregon Coast in the 1970s, “How the old stories peopled the landscape with excitement.”

Understanding local history brings a ghost of a memory to life, says Stafford. As a story reaches new ears, it provides insight and clarity to local decisions, defining character and place.

By sharing, Stafford says, one comes to realize that, “We are not a backwater place far away from where important things happen. Heroes are local, and the arena for living a courageous and important life is right here.”

As global warming and the impact of human life on a living planet Earth becomes



clear, the time seems ripe for storytellers and listeners.

"In a strange way, we now confront the entire earth as a Garden of Eden, a place created with its own rules, processes, ways of being strong and right, but also fragile and vulnerable," says Stafford. "We have come back into the garden, and we must learn to care for it."



Bonfire shelter at River Beach, Fort Stevens - *photo by Kate Lyons*

## Comments at Neawanna Point

*Tom Horning*

There is a special place in Clatsop County where everything comes together, a vital nexus so important that events and people naturally have found a way to protect it. Called Neawanna Point, it is where two rivers meet at the bay in Seaside. It is an ancient place, where the spirits of the Clatsop people are thought to live in the trees, awaiting their descendants and loved ones to come visit; a place where history runs deep, where villages millennia old are buried beneath the forest. It is only twenty acres, but it is unique and rare. It was saved from condominium development ten years ago, mostly because of its special history and value, but also because people loved and fought for its tranquility and beauty.

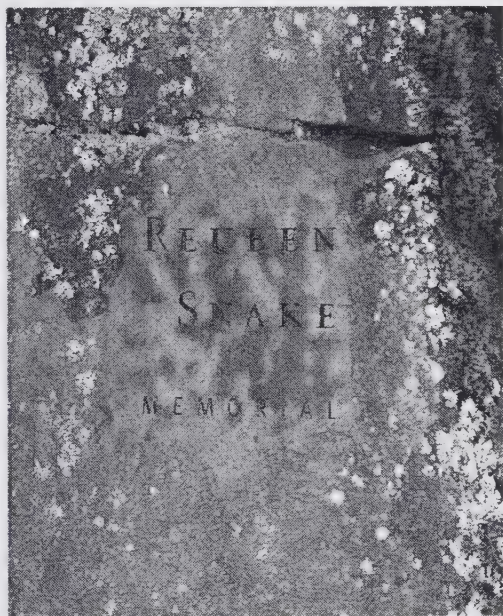
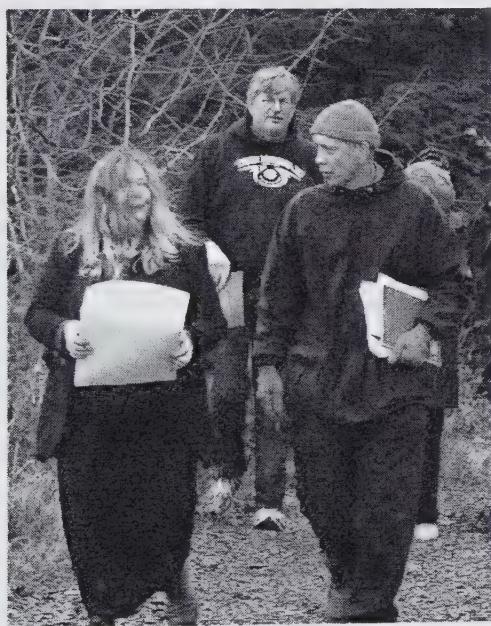
Built of cobbles, dune sand, peat and silt, this place once faced the open ocean as beachfront some 2500 years ago. The estuary is here, because this is where the rivers must flow, constrained by ridges of shoreline gravels that extend from Tillamook Head through Seaside to the dunes of Clatsop Plains. From these materials, storm floods, tides, and tempestuous ocean waves have sculpted and eroded channels and sand flats. Roots and stumps of subsided ghost forests peer out of the river bank. They provide mute testimony of giant tsunamis that have swept away sand and tree, violently surging inland as deep torrents in the dark of night, pulling everything irretrievably back out to sea. Nature has built this place and taken it apart, experimenting and modifying without plan.

Coho salmon spawn in the tributaries of Neawanna Creek, as they have for hundreds of thousands of years. Uncounted numbers of fish have passed by this place and provided fresh food for the Clatsop people in mid-winter, when fishing in the Columbia was poor. So important were these salmon that, in the 1851 Treaty of Tansy Point, the people requested perpetual fishing rights only here, at Neawanna Point. Regrettably, Congress did not ratify the treaty, and so the Clatsops signed away their ancestral lands, all of the county, without compensation. Not only had small pox and measles decimated the tribe in the 1770's, but, decades later, settlers laid claim to their lands and chased them off. Faced with such adversity, many of the tribe moved south to the Siletz or north to the Chehalis to be with their own.

Celiast was the daughter of Coboway, chief of the Clatsop people, who greeted the Lewis and Clark Expedition in 1805. She married Silas Smith, a settler, and moved to French Prairie in the 1840s; but the need for her people and place drew her back to the estuary, a leader returned. Her people saw her canoe coming toward Neawanna Point and joyously met it at the river bank. They picked her up over their heads and, with fullness in their hearts, carried her across the marsh and into the forest, where

they celebrated her return. She built a small one-room house in this forest and raised her three children for the next two years before moving to a new home farther away. The people, who had given up hope, were restored and reassured that their way of life was not lost. To this day, grandchildren of Celiast's grandchildren still live in the Seaside area.

Ruben Snake, from the Winnebago tribe in Nebraska, met the financier of the condominium project while both were undergoing cancer treatment. Confronted with his mortality, the financier saw his role in life change from development to conservation - perhaps turned by his disease, but most likely from his long conversations with Ruben, a renowned environmentalist and Indian rights activist. Sadly, Ruben died of his cancer, but the financier did not. It is rumored that he saw photos of Neawanna Point and felt that the land was too precious to develop. He ordered that it be set aside for conservation, and, in due course, it was granted to the local land conservancy. A stone memorial to Ruben now looks across the broad marshes toward the sea, beyond Celiast's forest, past the eagles and salmon, and from beneath the shade of spruce and pine that grow along the driftwood. Conserved for all time, this wild and tranquil place will forever be the home of the Clatsop spirits; and to those who can hear, it will speak of lessons learned by ancient and modern cultures, of evolving landscapes, of justice, and the bounds of Nature and her resources.



Carol Knutson, Tom Horning and Richard Rowland - *photos by Casey Ruic*



## How do we engage the community in the process of preserving natural history?

*Neal Maine* - Executive Director, North Coast Land Conservancy

That's a question that probably started the land trust in 1986. One of the things we've tried to rekindle is the relationship with the land. What else is there that you can defend on? And without being too trite, we've said, "The common ground is the ground itself." Is there anything else? I guess it'd be nice if there was something else, but we just don't know what that might be.

Entire cultures – not just people, but entire cultures come and go. And the ground is still here, independent of that phenomenon. That's our linkage, and it's why we purposely have included in the natural history thought process the idea that cultures are a part, but they're not, in fact, the ground itself. So, I think that's where we may have gone astray just a little bit, in terms of our culture.

I was riding back to Circle Creek the other night. I had layers and layers on, but it still seemed cold. I'll always remember that wind. My grandson, a 10-year-old 5th grader was with me, and he was having the same feeling. We'd been somewhere, we were walking to the car, and we both shuddered at the same time, like, "Geez, it is cold!"

So we were heading out to Circle Creek, back to my office, and there was a herd of elk out there in the meadow, like they are so many times; and my grandson said, "Boy, I bet the Indians got some fur off those elk to keep warm," because he was still thinking about how cold it was.

And I said, "Yeah, they did, Michael, they actually did harvest those elk and get that hair and hide," I said, "but they got a lot more, too. Even the intestines became their raincoats, and the bones became their tools, and at the end of the day, there was kind of nothing left."

And he said, "Wow, grandpa, they were really civilized."

This is the idea: the fundamental process from the herd has this linkage, and it's so easy to lose contact with it, unless you're working at it.

That's why we have kept the natural history, to get out of, "Oh, Indians here, white guys here." It's the cultural phenomena, different ways of doing business. Some [cultures] used elk and every piece of it. Some of them honored different things. Plasma screen tvs may be where this one's at right now, but they'll get by that. Different objects are the artifacts of a culture, but some of them (like the herd of elk) are linked directly back to the ground, and some aren't. The ones that are linked, we don't



communicate very well about, and I think that's the missing part.

That's one part of it, that organic connection, and valuing that linkage is, I guess, our challenge. It's the challenge each generation has, to make sure the next one doesn't lose contact with the ground, and it's so easy to do, in this particular culture. And the tendencies appear to be slow, but if we had pathways which we could trace, we'd know they're all going back to the ground.

It's so easy to think, "We've smashed the atom." But the truth is, to these pine needles, that's nothing new, and that bird started smashing the atoms 3 billion years ago. That's old news.

What have we exploited from nature? [We have a quote in our center] that says, "Thus the task is not to see what no one yet has seen, but to think what no one has thought about what everybody has seen." That's our challenge; we need to be able to think about all those obvious things, to find that linkage.



Neal Maine - photo by Casey Ruic

## Comments at the Coastal Natural History Center

*Kim Stafford*

There are so many stories that rely on us, rely on our elders, to be told. And a story may be something that a child says; what an incredible thing, isn't it? Sometimes we get discouraged. We think, "How can we turn our strange destructive ways?" But what gives me hope is we have the materials, we have the resources that those people had; we have men and women, we have summer and winter, we have joy and grief, we have childhood and age, we have cedars, water, sky. We have all the same resources, and out of those resources, the natives made a culture that was a peaceable one, and out of the same resources, we also can make it so.

So your homework assignment—are you ready? Appear to someone in power in a dream, and help them see there is another way. OK? If it doesn't work in a dream, then find another way.

One time, I was at [a native village]; here I was, welcomed by the people my people have almost destroyed. And they had the dancers, and they had the singing, and one of the elders stood up and said, "Down on the corner was a song, waiting [for] anyone to hear it. I heard it, and I want to sing it for you!" He sang the song, and then one of the others got up, "I got up this morning and looked into the fire, to see if there might be some words, and there were some words, these were the words," and he began to speak.

Then they rolled out the feeding mat, and they started bringing in the feast, this is a dinner, and the women came with the huckleberries, and the bitter roots, and all the fruits of the earth. Then the men came with the salmon and venison, and these people went on and on to get all this food in place. Then we sat down, and I had my little daughter with me, and I didn't know what to do. All the instructions were in [their native language]. But there was a native woman who took pity on me, and she said, "It's the ritual tasting. Taste the huckleberries, then give your daughter some. Taste the salmon, and give your daughter some." And then she said, "Now, pig out! It's time to pig out!" And these people were feasting like crazy. As we ate, more food was coming, oranges were being rolled into place, loaves of wonder bread were being thrown and were bouncing, and the last things were gallon-sized ziploc bags, to take the feasting home.

And so I thought, "This is wrong! I am being welcomed to this feast, I have no right to be here." So I went around, and I was the dumb white guy, saying, "Can I contribute? Is there a way I can pay?" No one would look at me.

Finally there was an old lady, she was not very tall, she was carrying a bunch of food.

“Is there a place I can donate?”

She looked up at me. “Oh you want to donate?”

“Yeah!”

“You will find a way.”

I went out [later], and there was this old lady. She was now sitting in an aluminum lawn chair, next to where they put the steak and salmon, salt and pepper. The wind shifted, she closed her eyes; then the wind shifted again, and she opened her eyes.

“Kim! Did you get enough? I don’t think you got enough.”

I said, “No, no, I got enough.”

She said, “No, but your family, back in the city? Here, there’s one salmon left. Here!”

“Well, I can’t take it.”

“You must take it.”

I said, “Well, I don’t know how to...”

“Take off your coat.” So she laid this fish on my coat, and she wrapped it up. And I went out, back to the city.

Her homework is our homework: “You will find a way.” Let’s go forth from this place, fueled by our teachers and our helpers, searching for a way to use these beautiful resources. Thank you for having me here. Mahalo.

## A Welcome to Ecola

*Jay Raskin*

Let me welcome you all to Ecola Park. I am by profession an architect, not a word-smith or an artist. The task [of welcoming you] is made a bit easier since it takes place in this very special place—Ecola Park. How people live in and relate to environment around them is of special concern for an architect. This park has some of the most visible evidence of the native peoples who used this as a summer camp, both in the middens that are now washing away, but also in these leveled picnic areas where their lodges were located. The extraordinary views from Ecola would have inspired them as well as they do us.

Christian Norberg-Schultz, a philosopher who influenced me when I began studying architecture, would have called this [place] a romantic landscape, which for him signified a landscape where the earth and sky interlock and where man's creations are overpowered by nature's. This is certainly the case when we see the homes and business of Cannon Beach, a thin layer stretched along the coast, precariously vulnerable to the ocean. Norberg-Schultz was very concerned with the *Genus-loci* of a place (the spirit of the place) and felt that architecture should reflect that spirit which begins with the natural landscape. These are lessons that I have tried to emulate in my own work. This starts with the understanding of how buildings fit into the natural environment, and goes on to how they should fit in with the built environment, looping back to how our cities should sit in the environment.

As we stand in this park, there is another connection with the native peoples that I would like to acknowledge; that is the realization that the act of creating objects means that you often must destroy something to provide the raw materials, and that you should acknowledge that destruction. Native peoples had special prayers of thanks that they gave, and they then created useful and beautiful tools, implements, boats, clothing, masks, and houses. I am not a religious or particularly spiritual person, but I recognize that wood, stone, metal, and other materials that I use come from some place, that the land that will become a dwelling had living things growing on it that will be destroyed or displaced. [Recognizing] that loss, there is an obligation to make sure that the dwelling or building is well crafted, that it uses materials wisely, and that it is beautiful and gives delight to the people who use or see it.

Ecola Park also brings forth personal memories. It is the place that my wife and I were married, 26 years ago, and [we have shared] innumerable walks, picnics, and tide pools with family and friends. My wife, Elizabeth, is French and has a deep attachment to her local region. The French word "*pays*" means both country and also a local region. When one says "*mon pays*" it doesn't mean "my country" so much as the



place where I am from, which includes the local history, culture, dialect, food, and the place where one's ancestors are buried. For her, this attitude can be summed up by talking about the "vielle Pierre" or old stones. We don't have the thousands of years of habitation, of old stones, to tie us to the land. We do have the "old trees" which reflect the old growth coastal forest, of which this park is a prime example. It is here we get a sense of connection with the past and place.

The native peoples significantly managed this landscape with the use of fire, extending habitat that provided the plants and animals they liked to eat. They did this in such a way that European settlers thought what they were seeing was a "natural" or untouched landscape. In many ways theirs is a much more sophisticated vision of how to "be" in the landscape than the vision we have replaced it with.

But whether it is old trees or old buildings, the key element is to invest the environment with meaning and to have that meaning come back to define who you are. This is sometimes difficult for us to do. I come from eastern European stock that immigrated to Minnesota in the late 19th and early 20th century. My parents moved to Oregon in the 1950's. Although there I still have family in Minnesota, most of my relatives are scattered throughout the country. We are the norm for a country that believes in personal freedom, willing to forsake place for opportunity, believing we can change both who we are and the world. In my own life, I grew up in Portland, went to college in Chicago, and have lived in France, and San Francisco before settling here in Cannon Beach. My connection to this place has spanned thirty-four years, and it is a place that I can call "mon pays" in spirit. My wife mentions the requirement of having at least three generations of ancestors buried in the area, an impossible standard for my wandering family. But I have also been drawn by the special places, where people care passionately about the place they live.

Having our environment tell us who we are can be a heavy burden, memories are not always pleasant, or even truthful. Memories and sense of place are not always held in common, and can be part of almost intractable conflict such as in the Middle east, northern Ireland, or Kosovo. But if a balance can be achieved, there is an immensely satisfying sense of being, of sitting looking out over this landscape, seeing the same scene but with infinite variety, of connecting past and present.

## Courtship at Indian Beach

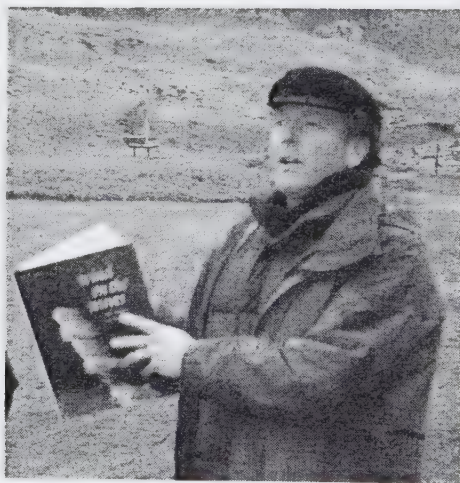
*Kim Stafford*

Originally published in *Wind on the Waves* (Graphic Arts Center Publishing Co. 1992).  
Reprinted by permission of the author.

So one time me and Miles had our boards down to Indian Beach when the waves were high? You know how great that can be. Beach slants so steep your waves build up fast, and you can catch a ride. We got our boards off the car, and only saw one ahead of us, on the water way out beyond the breakers.

"Who's the dude?" Miles says. We got our suits on. You know Miles wears that weird camouflage trip, that polyester body suit in browns and swirls, all worn to a fuzzy nap like fur. You can pick him out in a crowd.

"I'm going for the dude," says Miles. He loves top dog. But when we got in the water and worked out through the waves, we saw her long hair. Slender thing, but a looker. She was riding easy on the swells. Didn't glance our way at all.



Kim Stafford at Ecola State Park - photo by Casey Ruic

Now Miles, you know Miles, he's gonna show this lady how to ride a wave. First decent swell, he's up and dancing. Bebop on the board, he's pushing the crest off his tail, fooling around, swaying along the line, flying like a bird, the wave-crest spray in a halo around him. He's got so much style it doesn't seem fair. His feet kiss the wave and the board glides. And every so often, you can see him glance over his shoulder to see if

she sees him. It's a good wave, and he takes her all the way in. Me, I'm just watching. But she's not. She's on the low swells, looking out to see, the sunlight gleaming off her suit, sleek and strong. Her wet hair long down her back, she's rocking on the water.

I know the feeling. There's a rush riding a big wave, you know, and that's what gets you there. But some days – I think you're with me – the swell out past the breakers is what's best about it, riding easy, looking around.

There were some sea lions out that day, rolling and diving. They were crazy about it. Maybe it was the mating season or something, the way they went to nipping each other and fooling around. The big male would roll against a female, rub against her brown fur, and take her down. But the gulls were swooping, and the air had that sweet tang and warm. You didn't want to be anywhere else. You felt like you belonged in your body, and your body belonged in the water.

This lady was into it, I could tell. She watched the gulls soar high, swing away, and her eyes flashed my way one time, like she knew I felt it. That was kind of a thrill. The waves shut us off from all the people sounds. I liked that.

But Miles, he never goes for that stuff. He's into power rides, man. And here he comes flying back out, thrashing hard with his hands, smashing through the waves until he gets to me, and then he shouts loud enough for her.

"Real nice," he says, "that baby was sweet. So why sit around, buddy? Let's go for it!"

"Miles," I said, "I'm liking it here."

"Suit yourself, wimp." And he's off to grab another wave. There's nothing subtle about Miles. He's gonna get this lady's attention. But I notice when he stands, he hasn't tied his ankle thong. He's in a hurry, but that's dumb. If the board cuts loose from him, it's gone and he's swimming. But he hasn't really wiped out today, so I watch him go.

Now Miles, you know he lives to show off. But when he doesn't get the attention he expects, he flips into another dimension of performance, and that's what happened then. He's gonna let this lady know where it's at, or die trying, so he's shooting the line, throwing his body around. And in the middle of his rush he takes a long look back at her. She's watching this time, over her shoulder, and that holds his gaze just a little too long. He grins, and his board tip dips into the wave, and he's into a cartwheel. He even does that in a beautiful way, spinning and going down, but the board catches the crest and keeps going, with him behind the wave, dog paddling, shaking water off his head, looking around.

It's then I notice the sea lion, the big one, rolling pretty close to Miles, then diving. I feel the bottom drop out of my gut. It all happens in slow motion then, like the rush



of a really big wave, like the slow turn when you lose it, and the green wall coming down. I'm reaching for water to start his way, when I see that sea lion sidle up to Miles the way he did to the females, swirl around him and nudge him under.

The lady is fast. By the time I get in gear, she's flying over the water like a loon. There's a long, steady power in a wave, and that's how she moves toward Miles. He's up and sputtering, crying like a kid, trying to stand on the water, and the big sea lion swimming circles on him, rolling and turning.

It's like she says something to the sea lion, and it dives. I'm up close by then, and Miles grabs my board. His teeth are chattering, and his knuckles go white as he heaves himself up. The lady has pulled back, watching us. She's beautiful, breathing hard, her mouth open, her eyes steady on Miles, but quiet. I thank her, but she doesn't say a word, and Miles just stares at her, then looks away.

That's the last time I did Indian Beach. Miles has been pretty busy in town, and when I went to see him he didn't even have the board in the living room like he used to. He keeps it in a corner of his bedroom now. Weekends, he likes to travel alone. We used to go together every chance we got. That's all changed. Once I drove down without my board, just to walk, listen to the waves. I thought I might see her. Miles didn't want to go, and you know, I just sat on the beach while the waves got tall and good.



View from Ecola State Park - photo by Casey Ruic



# No One Owns the Source

*Carol Knutson*

A keen admirer of Kim Stafford, Barry Lopez, in *About This Life*, also reminds us of why our wildly designed sequence of events, our three-day journey from Ecola State Park to the Chinooks on the other side of the Columbia River to share stories, is crucial to the well being of all of us:

"It is [through] the power of observation, the gifts of eye and ear, of tongue and nose and finger that a place first rises up in our minds; afterward, it is memory that carries the place, that allows it to grow in depth and complexity. For as long as our records go back, we have held these two things dear, landscape and memory. Each infuses us with a different kind of life. The one feeds us, figuratively and literally. The other protects us from lies and tyranny. To keep landscapes intact and the memory of them, our history of them, alive, seems as imperative a task in modern times as finding the extent to which individual expression can be accommodated before it threatens to destroy the fabric of society.

If I were now to visit another country, I would ask my local companion, before I saw any museum or library, any factory or fabled town, to walk me in the country of his or her youth, to tell me the names of things and how, traditionally, they have been fitted together in a community." (Barry Lopez, *About This Life*.)

Tonight, Kim and Perrin and Guthrie Stafford, we hope you can sense our gratitude to you for traveling this way with your keen observations and love of the natural world. Perrin, your beautiful, quiet elegance and warmth were present at University of Oregon when I was leaving the doctoral program in English to teach once again at the coast. Guthrie, Cannon Beach holds tight to memories of your grandfather, Oregon Poet Laureate William Stafford and Dorothy and their teachings, along with many northwest greats who taught Haystack workshops: Theodore Roethke, Ursula LeGuin and Terrence O'Donnell among them. And Lewis and Clark University's Northwest Writing Institute Founding Director, Kim Stafford, your books influence a new generation of writers and artists and readers. Your words resonate with poets and scientists and workers and lovers and children and dwellers encountered along the way and here tonight for this winter gathering: "One morning I woke in the forest, I looked up to the first light at the tops of the trees and I could feel their gratitude. I could feel their green surge of thanks for the sunlight, for the earth, for water. And I could feel their affinity for one another." The writer's mantra, "If you want to know me, read my works" isn't the whole story here. After cups of tea on your deck in Portland, countless books read and emails exchanged, we discover that the page alone can't contain your artistic genius. Kim Stafford is a wild performance artist: oyster eating, fire building, guitar

playing, generous hearted, wild man. His work strengthens and expands whatever circle he happens to be in at whatever time and place.

We sense in the clouds the stewards of this place: the heavenly host of Gainor Minott, Phyllis and Walter Knutson, Margaret and Harley Sroufe, Dorothy and Harvey Lindsey, Karen Maine, Oney Camberg, William and Bret Stafford and all those who have come before us bless this occasion and inspire us to become better caretakers of our home for future generations. Oregon Poet John Daniel states, "It is not a matter of owning the land, or of working the land, but of learning to hold the land in mind, to begin gropingly—to imagine ourselves a part of it. ... Home is not the place we were born, or that perfect somewhere else we used to dream of, but the place where we are—the place... we learn to see and listen for and come to know as part of our lives."

We remember words of poet Willis Eberman, who called Seaside home and yet stated, "I Too, Am a Traveler" in his book where he reinforced this sense of our ancestors' 20,000 years of custodianship beneath our feet: "beyond the clangor of progress, / we resume the journey past sunset, toward morning." Eberman reminds us in his poem *Elk at Silver Point*: "The earth is ours to destroy / or love once again. We must decide very soon which it will be."

To welcome you and those folk new to this geography home with a story of Cannon Beach, an old friend from graduate school and a long time storyteller and carpenter Peter Lindsey is present. Before leaving for Viet Nam and the University of Oregon, Peter and Architect Jay Raskin were our Life Guards when we were children. And Peter, Neal Maine, Ed Johnson and I taught together at Seaside High School in the 1970's and have remained friends ever since. Peter Lindsey promised not to say anything about us from our youth in Cannon Beach in front of our children.

*They call it regionalism, this relevance—  
The deepest place we have: in this pool forms  
The model of our land, a lonely one,  
Responsive to the wind. Everything we own  
Has brought us hear: from here we speak.*

by William Stafford, from *Stories that Could Be True*

## *Two Shorts by Peter Lindsey*

### Splitting Wood as an Art

Splitting wood is an art. Most anyone can chop up green alder or cedar into serviceable fire wood. Confronted with the prospect of paring a five-to six-foot round of twisted-grain spruce or fir log is quite another matter. The Art who taught me many of the subtleties was Art Smith.

Art and his wife Audrey lived on the Canadian Side at the end of Larch Street. The Smiths were a sweet couple who had labored long and hard with scant reward. They always looked tired, like the struggle to keep even had just about caved them in. The Smiths, in one of life's ironies, were the very people to lend a hand to others. Art joined us on several; wood adventures in the waning days of wood gathering.

Art limped painfully. He had sustained a crippling injury at a logging mill. Pausing to lend a fellow worker his rain gear, he had fallen from a deck and received injuries that paralyzed him initially and plagued him in later years.

One day he rode along with us to Tillamook Head. We located a huge fir log moldering away in the undergrowth. Scrabbling around in the salal and ferns, we succeeded in carving up the mammoth with a long-barred McCulloch. We younger guys savaged the first few pieces with a maul and surveyed the disheartening results. A period of maundering and grumbling ensued. Pesky rain began slicking our tools and bodies.

"Boys, this going to be a long day," someone offered.

Art hobbled over to the log and began inspecting the project. A dissertation on log disassembly followed. Art never issued orders; he merely posed suggestions in a soft voice and then demonstrated the precepts.

"This old fir log has been down seasoning for years. Look at the pieces you've split. See the grain, real tight, but it's splitting more like spruce than fir. The reason is the twist in it. See the way the grain turns and curves. We'll get her though. Let me see a wedge. Thanks. I'll start here on the edge of this round and open it up across this close-grained section."

Art, barely able to heft the maul, translated the down stroke precisely onto the wedge and a fissure developed. Deftly he relocated the wedge in just the right quadrant, struggled to lift the maul aloft, and let it drop. A satisfying pop signaled the first dissection.

'Now, one of you boys try it.'

We stood in a circle and nodded. When a magician explains a trick, it all seems so simple. That day I learned a few things about cutting wood. The principles transfer nicely to other tasks in life. Knowing lines of resistance and streams of energy helps surmount the apparently insurmountable. You just need to know where to place the wedge. An elderly man, challenging infirmity, taught me that one dreary afternoon in the foothills of the Coast Range.



*photo by Casey Ruic*

## Crowing

Professor Lindsey, while aware of the pitfalls of anthropomorphism, cannot avoid drawing some conclusions from his personal observations of our neighbors in the animal kingdom. For reasons too complex for my thin mind and this short piece, I find myself strangely drawn in sympathy and spirit to crows. I know folks who, if their home furnishings and knick-knacks give evidence, are duck people, dog people, cat people, bear people, and even cow and hippopotamus people. I favor crows. Many hate crows. I am not an owl.

Crows scavenge. So do eagles and hawks. I've never been quite so keen on raptor birds of the upper air. Their lofty and aloof nature shows a patrician disdain for things going on down here closer to the ground where we mix our affairs with crows and sparrows. Crows seem more like us. They indulge in petty spats and squabbles. They



hang out in gaggles, gossiping and chatting over a snack of pizza crust or a scrap of cookie.

I watch them commute to their daily occupations, traversing the same route day after day from their roosts in the hills. At gloaming, they return, ghosting through the pink-green alder copses in the creek bottoms, whirling and wheeling like ashes from a fire. They have purpose, a pattern, an occupation that has rhythm and regularity. They travel as a body, a Dark Clan perpetually on the hunt and peck.

Certain crow qualities deserve emulation, to my mind. A common sight in wood, village, and pasture is a crow family unit, a puffy black bowling-pin youngster and its parents sharing a perch for some social time. They nudge and snuggle one another, nurturing.

Crows hang tough against adversity. An external threat to one is a challenge to all, and they league together in fearless courage to roust intruders and enemies. Countless times I have seen a murder of crows band together to assail a potential enemy, a nest robbing raccoon, raven, or eagle. Clouds of crows materialize magically in these circumstances, drawn from far reaches of the crow domain within instants. The haranguing din of hundreds of righteously indignant crows is frightening in its volume and intensity. Crows seem to have an airspace, a sort of sky territory. Interlopers, regardless of size or potential danger to a crow are dealt with summarily. Crows will have a “go” at bald eagles or hawks, *mano a mano*, without hesitation. Their courage appears limitless. Crows, like good Marines, remain at the side of fallen comrades. An injured crow can expect assistance, or at least compassion, from his kind. Several times in recent years, I’ve watched as a crow in terrible straits has been attended by another. Many people of the subways of New York City might hope for as much consideration.

Crows appear able to survive, indeed thrive, in the Twenty-first Century. Their numbers, like our own, are like sands of the sea. They are tough and canny as individuals, yet can live harmoniously in close proximity to countless numbers of their peers. Crows, rats as well, relish the carrion and junk food products that have become the mainstay of contemporary life.

Perhaps crows have something to teach us. I can only speculate.

## Welcome to the River Theater

*Nancy Montgomery* co-founder, board member of the River Theater

Nancy Cook invited me to give a brief intro to this space in which we're gathered today, and I do believe passionately about this interior space and the work we do here – and about keeping the energy that perpetuates this space positive, if not powerful. The art of theater is founded on hope: the hope within each character; their deepest goal, however hidden by their actions. Theater is, essentially, telling stories. The quote I most readily reach for is from my mentor and co-founder here, Karen Bain. I claimed it as a sort of mantra during our production of Barry Lopez' *Crow & Weasel*: *Telling stories allows us to recognize ourselves... in each other.*

The purpose for creating the River Theater was to connect people—to explore the power of theater as a social tool, to raise voices seldom heard. Telling stories allows us to recognize ourselves in each other. Telling stories—whatever form those stories might take in the telling.

We began our 1st year with a potluck and Native American blessing featuring local foods: salmon, hazelnuts, berries. Lakota/Sioux Indian and storyteller Robert Owens gave the blessing—with Chinook approval. And the River has been blessed, this space, with 10 years of storytelling and positive, nurturing energy is a gathering place for the people of this community. A safe place to tell stories—even difficult ones.

The ten years of storytelling that followed ranged from the very silly—both for kids and adults... to love stories, painful and joyful... and a few of musicals. Cabaret included a discussion of fascism entitled “And what’s that got to do with us?” There were tragedies... and the hope springing from tragedy in “Sweet Scent of Apples,” about 2 sisters, survivors of child sexual abuse. Also far from the safety of silly: 9 Parts of Desire, raising the voices of 9 Iraqi women—each woman was familiar in some powerful way, despite the accent and the veil and the culture... We recognize ourselves. We can learn from every story we hear or tell—if we’re paying attention, eloquently.

This is one of the last groups to gather here. Our very last will be Festival of Fools on Leap Year Day, at the end of this month. I hope it’s palpable—the inspiration, invigoration that has lived here for so long and sent so much out into the community in these audiences. I hope And I hope that we are all are able to take some of this out with us into our lives. That we feel a spark ignite again—as it did for me when Nancy Cook called me yesterday—and allow that spark to change us. These stories, allow them to change us, so we can recognize ourselves in each other—even when no one is speaking.

## Conversation at the River Theater

*Steve Forrester, Kim Stafford & Robert Adams*



Steve Forrester at the River Theater - photo by Casey Ruic

**Steve:** I want to start our discussion talking about Place. The thing about Astoria, Clatsop County, too, in general, but certainly Astoria and where we're sitting, is that we live in a very singular place. And these days in America that's a pretty rare experience... because most of America is sort of enfranchised in big box into a state of unanimity. I'd like to hear you two...your observations about where we live, here, in Clatsop County and Astoria, in terms of this notion of place, and what place means to people and how people in many places are losing that sense of place.

**Kim:** I have a question to put on top or that for Robert. I've heard if you are from New Jersey you are from the whole state, which probably isn't true, but I'm curious, could you tell us one indelible thing about the exact place that you are from, as we arrive in Astoria?

**Robert:** You mean in New Jersey? ... We were only twenty-four miles from Manhattan, yet we were actually nearer a bigger woods unmolested than we are now, so it was wonderful.

**K:** So what about Astoria? You're someone who has come here. What are some of the hallmarks of this place for you?



**R:** Boy, that's a good question! That's what I was going to ask you!

**K:** You'll have your turn.

**R:** I suppose my wife and I most enjoy a trail or two, a view down the street... they're almost all very specific. We actually moved here primarily because we wanted to walk the beach. We worked for thirty years to try to move here. We couldn't come up with a way to earn a living, so we had to wait until my wife retired, and then we came here after thirty years of dreaming of it. The main draw for us was the beach, to be able to walk there. So you'll find I am most feisty when I think that experience is being compromised.



*Cover photo, West from the Columbia - Robert Adams*

**K:** I brought along something that is going to lead to a homework assignment for you all. I was walking through Tijuana one time, Mexico, really a kind of a tough place, a damaged place, to many people maybe an ugly place. But on a telephone pole there



was a song called *Mi Tijuana Carida* (My Beloved Tijuana), that someone named Raffa had posted on telephone poles all over town, it was a love song to his town. And I can't sing it, I don't have the tune, it starts out: "I sing to you my beloved Tijuana"... It's this love song, and at the bottom it says, "Sing it as you like. This song is not possible to buy, it is for you."

So... I think that spirit of being in a place, it's part of my opportunity and a job as a citizen, as an artist to love this place and care for this place and make things and give to this place. I think we ought to start our conversation about place [here]. What an amazing place we're at in this moment: to hear the rain on the roof and also the rumbling of the bridge. We're hearing something that's of this place, and we're hearing time traveling on.

[We are] in a place that is very soon going to be a story, if I am understanding right, this won't be what it is. This [River Theater] will become a story, and people will tell about those that were in this room, what they experienced, what they said to each other, what they learned and what they took forth. So often part of place is to know something that isn't there anymore, but to be a keeper of that.

When I was in Laredo one time, I was talking to an old man, and I said, "Señor, it must be strange to have lived here all your life and to see all of the changes". He said two things: "Ah yes, I see what used to be, (the old timer seeing what used to be) and I also see what might have been." That's the haunting part: what we might have made of this place. That's where the artist comes in, or the listener, or the friend, the cousin of the place. To make something that might be in that place. End of sermon.

**S:** Very nice, sir. Let's talk for a moment about the notion of an aesthetic. Of course, that word lies specifically to art, certainly to the photographers, certainly to painting, but also to poetry. I am not sure I can sit here and define what aesthetic means, but it's been my experience that in places like this, Astoria or Clatsop, small towns, some of them have an aesthetic, some don't. Or some of them have the aesthetic of the big box and the franchise, and that's all they've got. I'll start, as you did, Kim, with asking Robert to talk about New Jersey. I'd like hear you talk a little bit, Robert, about the aesthetic that you found in New Jersey when you lived there, as opposed to what you've found during your ten years of living here in Astoria. A lot's changed here, but has there been an emergence of aesthetic here?

**R:** That's a really good question; that's a really tough one. The place where I was raised looked like Edward Hopper paintings basically, and there's still a little bit of Edward Hopper here in Astoria. Almost everyone who visits us, mentions it.

**S:** For the folks who aren't necessarily familiar with Edward Hopper, just describe what he does.

**R:** [Edward Hopper] was, I think, the greatest American painter, and he worked in the east. His subject was most famously New York and surrounding areas, but at the time that he worked, it was composed mostly of relatively low rise buildings, what you might see on Commercial here. When we've had visitors, that's the first thing they remark, "This place looks like it's in some sort of time warp." We've still got buildings that are scaled to human size and they're, in many cases, well maintained. What a remarkable thing to protect. The difficulty is how to avoid living in a museum but retain your history as well as grow and accommodate change. That is really the puzzle we're working with. We live in a place to which people are traveling. It's possible to read the New York Times and find article after article about Astoria. The reason they're speaking of [Astoria] as a special place, is because it's held on to it's identity, because it's got edges. Part of that's God-given because we have water on which we can't build, but part of it's been because we've been careful not to allow big box brutality right here in town. My hope is that we'll be vigilant. We'll have to be if we want to retain our identity.



West from Astoria, Oregon - Robert Adams

**K:** I am thinking of a quotation that Edward Hopper carried in his pocket at all times, I can't get it exactly, but it's something like, "I paint the world outside of myself by the

light of the spirit within myself." So... art citizenship, being in a place, is a combination of what's there, the way you see what's there, and what you bring to what's there. I brought a little teaching aid from the beach, it's like a little wing of wood. I think we should pass this around. Everyone should just hold this, and if it disappears we'll know that someone really needs it. This [wing of wood] is a combination of something that grew in a certain way and then was shaped by the place where it lived. It was whittled, it was diminished to its essence by the trauma of its life in the surf.

Sense of place... I think what Robert said is both obvious and very profound: to be surrounded by Young's Bay and the River on two sides, or three sides, is that shaping from outside ourselves and then there's what we do in that space. I noticed a little shorthand when someone mentioned "a friend of the River Theater," but what was said was "a friend of the River." The river is such a huge teacher here. Sometimes brutal in its teaching, often filled with light and a big open space. I remember when I did an oral history project in Florence on the Oregon Coast, I loved how the committee of pioneers said "our area of concern is bounded by Cummings Creek on the north, Maple Ton on the East and Siltcoos Lake on the south." There was no mention of the West because [the ocean] is just there. That's a huge humbling element in a place like this.

**S:** Kim is collaborating with our company on another project that has to do with cowboy towns in Eastern Oregon, and often how you understand your own place is by looking at someplace else. One way of knowing what you want is by knowing what you don't want and so forth. You have been both eloquent and funny about the topic of rodeo and the West, but that's what's defined as the West in the popular imagination. Describe for a minute, if you could, the aesthetics that you've run into in small Eastern Oregon towns as opposed to what's here.

**K:** Oh man, you're making me homesick for those places, you know? Pull into Brothers... stop at Brothers for a cup of coffee, and you're about two sentences away from, "Are you a teacher? We need a teacher!" A sort of spontaneous job interview there. North Powder, fabulous place. Helix, Lone, La Grande... these wonderful places, and I think part of the aesthetic out there is a little bit like the coast: it's tough. Economically, weather's tough... could I just do a little poem from that culture? This is by—since it's raining, in honor of the rain—by a poet from the Great Basin named S. Omar Barker. You won't find him in your anthology, but he's worth tracking down.

*When your boots are full of water and your half brim's all adrip  
and the rain sets little rivers runnin' down your horse's hip  
and every step your pony takes purty near bogs him down  
it's then you get to thinkin' bout them boys that work in town.  
Now they may be sellin' ribbons they may be slingin' ash*

*it doesn't really matter when the thunder starts to crash  
they just do their little doin's, your wage is low or high  
let it rain till hails upon, they're always warm and dry  
and their beds are stuffed with feathers or at worst with plenty of straw  
while your old soggy may go a driftin' down the draw  
they've got no ropes to fret about the kinks when it gets wet  
and there aren't no puddles formin' in the saddles where they set  
when there's women folk to cook them up the chuck they most admire  
while you gnaw cold hard biscuits cause your cook can't start a fire  
when you're ridin' on a...*

**K:** (Now this run on sentence would drive an English teacher wild...)

*...cattle range and you hit a rainy spell  
your whiskers get plum mossy and you note a mildew spell  
from everything in the leather in our sack  
and you get the chilly quivers from the water down your back,  
you couldn't pull your boots off if you hitched them to a mule  
so think about them ribbon clerks and you'll call yourself a fool  
for ever punchin' cattle with a horse between your knees  
instead of sellin' ribbons and not taking your ease.  
you sure do get to ponderin' on them jobs in town  
when your slicker gets to clappin' and the rain comes slidin' down  
it's misery in your gizzard and your sure do aim to quit  
and take most any sheltered job you figured you could get  
but when you bow your neck to quit without a doubt  
the rain beats you to it and the sun comes bustin' out  
and your wet clothes go to steamin' and most every where you pass  
you notice that stretch of rain has livened up the grass  
well that's how it is for cowboys when the rainy spell has hit  
they just hang on till its over and then there ain't no need to quit.*

(applause)

**K:** So you can only answer with a poem.

**S:** Thank you. The answer I would give to the question you asked earlier Kim, about what defines this place, for me, are the eccentrics, who are among us. There are a lot of them in this room today.

(laughter)

**K:** In this room? Are you serious? Will you raise your hands, eccentrics, please?



**S:** One of those eccentrics, some of you know: Mary [Blake] of Seaside, she was talking about living here and what goes on outside. She said, "There is no such thing as inclement weather, there is only inappropriate clothing."

**S:** So, Robert, I'd like to pass it to you for a second to talk about your forages to the ocean. The first book of yours I saw was a book of pictures taken out there. When you go out there to capture that scene, you bring something to that experience, something the rest of us probably don't see. I'd like to hear about that.

**R:** I suppose I do, in a way. It seems to me that all landscape photography or seascape photography is a composite of three things: One is geography, the specific place (that is why I think art thrives when you love where you are). There's also an element of autobiography. And then there is something else, a pointing beyond. We all feel it when we go to the beach or up on Coxcomb Hill. What we are looking at suggests, often very mysteriously, something more.



Southeast from the dunes at the base of the South Jetty - Robert Adams

When I think about our topic today, place, the question is, "Why is place important?" When I think about that question—if you'll forgive me for getting serious—it takes me to another question: what do all of us share? As a question, as a puzzle, as some

thing we run at each day; whether we're Republican, Democrat, young, old, Eastern or Western, whatever? What is the puzzle that we all share? And this is the serious part: I think the challenge everybody confronts is that the experience that we have is of undeserved suffering.

I think place helps in beginning an answer to that. Where we want to get to is the stage where we can say "yes" to life, where we can accept it, difficulties and all. When you live and visit a real place, it can help.

There's a wonderful little book that I really wish everyone in this room would have in their possession. It came out a year or so ago. It's by a young man named Alain De Botton. He's maybe forty years old—young to me—and the book is entitled "The Architecture of Happiness." In it, he asks the question, why do we like and respond to and value some buildings more than others? His answer is fundamentally that those buildings, in a whole variety of ways, align with beliefs, hopes, and dreams that we have. In the book, there is a page where he has two photographs, one of Westminster Cathedral in London and another of a McDonald's hamburger restaurant, also in London. Underneath them, he has a caption, a question; "What can we believe, where?"



Driftwood Stump, Clatsop Spit - Robert Adams

I think that's a key question, when you think about different landscapes and whether it is, for you, a place or not. It seems to me that the places that really matter to us, whether it's a grove of alders or a café where we can sit quietly and read the paper and drink a cup of coffee... that all of those locations are places in a profound sense, if they also point beyond themselves, if they speak somehow to our hopes and faith.

That is a large part of what drew my wife and me to Astoria. There have been anthropologists who have gone around and asked people, "If you were to conceive of the best landscape you could think of, what would it be composed of?" And one of the constants they found was that most people said, "I'd like to live near a place where I can look at a river going off to the horizon, and the river should have a bend in it..."

It's an interesting answer, and we've got it, right here. I think that's why we are so concerned, for example, about what's going on with the river. Are we going to see the bend in the river from the river walk? It's not only that we like to see the river and smell it, and see the buffleheads right there, 100 feet away. It's that we want to encounter the mystery of the long view, the view that tends off toward a metaphor, saying this particular place is like something else, something I've got in my heart that I dream about, that I ultimately care about. That's why I am here this morning, because I think we are living in such a place and I want passionately to have that quality protected. We've got to change many things, but the sense that the river conveys of what matters to the spirit... that has to be defended.

**K:** ...There's a little story at the beginning, Robert, some of you in Astoria may know the story. When John Kitzhaber was governor, they had a big "think" meeting down here with all different kinds of big shots and some place overlooking the river, and it got to some kind of an impasse? , I can't remember what kind of decision they were trying to make. But they came to an impasse, as often happens, and the governor said, "I just have to go think about this."

So they all watched him and he went outside and he went down by the river, and he was there for about an hour, just looking out the river. Then he came back, and he had something for the meeting, that didn't necessarily solve the problem, but it continued the conversation in a conclusive way. So if you'd be comfortable with this question, Robert, the water far away and being out on the jetty... This is a story I have heard about you, that there's certain things in our country and our world and our community so troubling, what can you do? And the story I've heard is that you just had to go out on the jetty and look at the water with your camera.

**R:** It's true. It's one of the greatest, most magic places any of us is ever going to encounter. When I photographed here initially, I'd spend parts of two winters and I had no other obligations. I would go out to the jetty in the morning, my pockets filled



with film, and I'd tell myself, "Now look Bob, be sensible about this, you've got the whole day, it's not going to rain, this is the most remarkable place in the world, just be cool and take it easy." And despite my vow, in an hour and a half the film was gone. 150 or 200 exposures had all been made, and I had to truck back to Astoria to get more. And I want to emphasize that I am not alone in this sense. I can not begin to count the number of people that I have met who have described to me some kind of a conversion experience—coming here and living a day, finding that this particular spot had changed them in a way they were never going to forget, and if they could manage it, they want to move here so they could live developing that. We've got a wonderful place, we've just got to keep it from being swallowed up by those crazed for money.

(applause)

**S:** You're both artists, and implicitly in this whole discussion is the art and the effect that they have on a place. Here in this county and particularly in Astoria, in this last decade and as far as 15 years ago, there has been a cultural rebirth. I'd call it a cultural revolution, but that has a certain Chinese indication of mystery that I don't mean to imply here. But the River Theater here is part of that, it's a major element of that happening. So was the restoration of the Liberty, of course, and the Astor Street Opry Company, and the various performing groups that are around here, and the galleries that have shown up and the artists that are at work every day. Richard Rowland, who cooked up this whole idea, who brought us here today, is an artist, too, and I don't think that most political thinkers or developers would do this, would have this sort of discussion. So I'm throwing it back to you, what does an artist bring to a community that no one else does? In school you take art; let's say you go to college and pursue it further with a professional idea in mind. But for the rest of us who don't do that, the arts are there, and in this town they're really there.

So what does an artist bring to a community that someone else doesn't?

**R:** If you look at the evidence of a lot of what's happening, in terms of writing and painting, I think one of the things they bring is an extremely ardent focus on place. Think of the number of writers that is associated with one or two places, like Emily Dickinson, Mark Twain, William Faulkner or painters like Charles Burchfield. It's striking—artists really live or die depending on whether their place is loved and cared for. The northwest is primarily famous, of course, for its writers. When you hear the rain, you know why: you can write inside... whereas the rest of us are out there under umbrellas. A couple of things that I dream of... let me get real specific: in Portland now and in the Cascades in Washington, there are places that you can find Kim's dad's words, in stone or on signs next to the highway. I would give almost anything to have on top of three or four headlands here, especially the ones that you reach by foot, like McKenzie Head or Tillamook Head... I would love to be able to walk and find at the



top a stone with a few words by Kim's dad or Denise Levertov.

**K:** Or by someone in this room. I just want to broaden the idea of artists, the community of artists isn't small and exclusive, it's huge and inviting. I would just invite everyone here, especially you young folks, to think about your calling a little bit. Not your job, not your major in college if you choose to go that way, but your calling—the thing you are called to do. My father has a poem called *Vocation*, and there's this conversation about this faint trail up ahead in the grass, and in end of the poem his father says to him, "Your job is to find what the world is trying to be." Not to make it be something, but I guess we are the listener to a place in which you help what is trying to happen, happen. So I think the greatest power in this room... we're just the catalyst to bring together people, especially young people, to step out of the rush of life for a few moments and think, "What is my calling, what am I called to do? Then I will go searching for where I can do that, who I will do that with, who will help me with my quest."

The start with that sense, a very small example of that: I was in a town down the coast further south one time, and I asked the young people there, who were 8 or 9 years old, "How many of you were born here?" A lot of hands go up. "How many of you are going to live here all your life?" Not quite so many. We talked about how you know that. And this one little girl said, "Oh sir, when I go out in the morning, down by the water, the surface of the water is so soft with light, I have to be there." And that's a huge thing, though it may sound like a small thing.

"Where am I going to be, what am I called to do, who will help me, how will we have fun doing it?" That's another part of your homework assignment: you have to write a love song to Astoria or your place, and then figure out your calling, "What am I called to do in this place?"

Photos by Robert Adams originally published in *West from the Columbia* (Aperture 1995).

Reprinted by permission of the photographer.

# If We Got Some Things Right

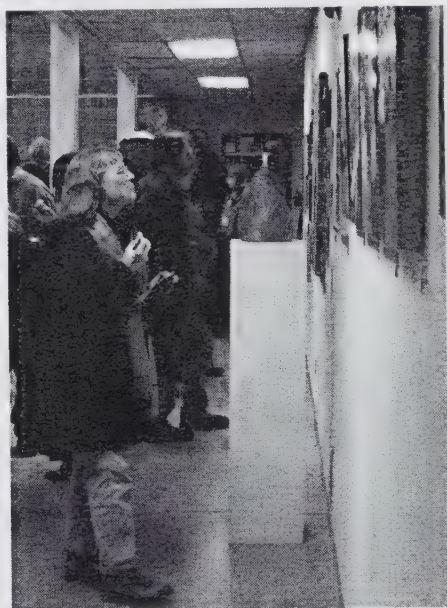
*Robert Adams*

If a majority believed themselves responsible for a sacred landscape, what might happen? This is my dream. What is yours?

- Tongue Point would be opened to the public as a park.
- The old lifesaving stations in Hammond and Klipsan would be restored as reminders of the self-sacrifice of which humans are capable.
- On McKenzie Head and Tillamook Head and other lookouts reached by foot there would be a few words by the greatest northwest poets – Theodore Roethke, William Stafford, Denise Levertov...
- On the beaches the only travel would be on foot.
- The sea would be cleaner, free of sewage from cruise ships and from the shore.
- There would be no plastic on the beach because we would have supported international government strong enough to stop it.
- The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department would take as much interest in caring for Clatsop Beach as in developing the campground.
- The air would be cleaner because we would have sacrificed with and for other countries to clean it up, and because slash burning here would stop.
- Animal trapping in our woods would stop.
- Clearcutting would stop.
- Large sections of the Coast Range would be reforested in mixed growth and permanently set aside; trails would be restricted to foot travel.
- There would be fewer developers because the human population would be encouraged, by economic incentives and penalties, to diminish to mid-twentieth century levels.
- Remaining open space on Clatsop Plains and on the Long Beach Peninsula would be kept undeveloped, and opened to all who are respectful walkers (as is rural land throughout Sweden).
- In Astoria somehow the wooden "Indian" head at the turnaround would disappear.
- There would be a new public library, one with an adequate book and periodicals budget.
- There would be an organization of caring and visionary citizens which took as its mission the continuous monitoring of regional and local government, and the support of appropriate office holders and candidates.

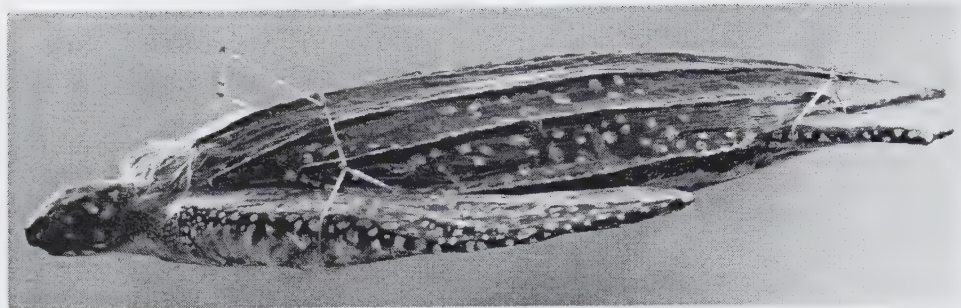
It could be a great place to live, a home that encouraged us to be our best.

# The Muses Among Us: CCC Faculty Art Show, 2008



*Top photo by David Lee Myers, bottom photos by Caitlin Wright*





*Kristin Shauck, Marc and Rachel Ward, Corrie Pederson, Jordane Marxer, Matthew Cramer, Robin Magee, Sasia Holthusen, Willy Misho, Rhonda Grudenick, Gillian Hall, Tim Liddiard*

## Life-Size Sea Turtle Project

*Kristin Shauck*

At the very moment Marc and Rachel Ward of *Sea Turtles Forever* were looking for help to create a life-size model of a Leatherback Sea Turtle, I was looking for a community service project for the Upward Bound group that I was going to be working with over the summer. As Marc and I discussed the best strategy for creating a model of this size, I felt that papier mache would be the best material because it is both strong and lightweight. This sea turtle project was truly a collaboration among many: myself, sea turtle experts Marc and Rachel Ward; Upward Bound students Corrie Pederson, Jordane Marxer, Matthew Cramer, Robin Magee, Sasia Holthusen, Willy Misho; and local artists Rhonda Grudenick, Gillian Hall, and Tim Liddiard. Because spreading the word for sea turtle awareness and conservation was the focus of the creative efforts of my Upward Bound Arts Exploration Group, not only did we work on the life size model, but also created the tempera resist sea turtle mural that is now on display in the Astoria Public Library. In addition, we created small papier-mâché turtles that were auctioned to raise funds for *Sea Turtles Forever*. As we learned more about sea turtle anatomy, habitat, and why these creatures (that actually swim in our very own waters off the Oregon coast) are so critically endangered, our passion for the cause grew. Our hope is that these works of art not only raise funds for a wonderful cause, but also stimulate, inspire, and advance environmental awareness of sea turtles and all the creatures of the earth.



## Custodial Aesthetics

*Richard Rowland*

I have always been aware that we live in a magical world. This big Nature is always looking at me—telling me how to be responsible and how to interact with my whole community. Sometimes the strongest nature comes from deep inside me and sometimes from the more distant outside world, but it is always changing, transforming our lives—dreaming us forward into every moment. Certain life materials in my environment have strong personalities (mana—life forces) so they come into me. We have a conversation and they go back out. Our intimate conversation is genuinely passionate, fully alive and sacred. My veneration for the environment and materials in it has come from a sense of purposeful and sometimes spontaneous interaction. As an artist I work from my passion and urgency. What I can give to my community is only a reflection or memory of living a creative, attentive life.



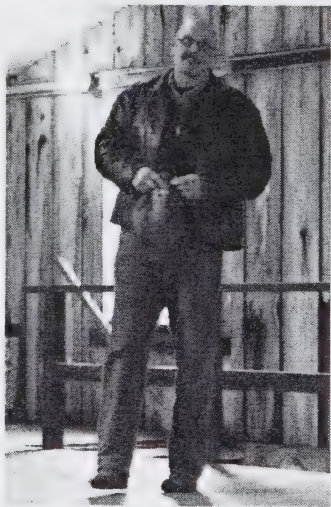
## When Place Is Part of the Family

### *Royal Nebeker*

Contrary to impulses of nationalism and patriotism, to honor place is to harmonize with a principal that applies not just to your place but to everyone's place. When you come to respect the land, you will respect the people on it.

[My recent] paintings are about conflict and resolution. In the 1960s I conscientiously objected to participation in my country's involvement in the war in Vietnam. I could not conceive of going to that place for that reason. Today I have the same reservations about my country's armed presence in the Middle East. To have a healthy and thriving connection to the land where you live is to submit to it in humility; turning from the urge to dominate. When we live well upon our land we will cease trying to control the land of other places. We will learn to love and honor other lands and the people on those lands.

Barry Lopez told a story on our campus about his travels among native tribesmen in Africa. When he asked them what they thought about an American journeying in the back country of Africa, they replied that his nationality was not important. What concerned them was that he traveled alone, without women or children. They said they had come to identify a man traveling without his family as being on exploitive or imperialist business. Kim Stafford comes to our place during the opening of this exhibition. He comes by invitation. We think we have something to learn from him about place. Kim is not a cultural imperialist; he brings his family.



Left: Royal Nebeker at the Alderbrook netshed - *photo by Nancy Cook*  
Right: Israel Nebeker at the Faculty Art Show - *photo by Caitlin Wright*



The Women Have Courage - oil mixed media - Royal Nebeker





Scott and Michelle - photo by David Lee Myers



## A Sense of Place—A Sense of Care

*David Lee Myers*

What if we made art as if life matters, as if art contributes to life's significance? What kind of art would we make? What kind of lives would we lead? Let's imagine that art and life would unify and be devoted to helping the human journey go well. By the act of living lives devoted to art, we show that life can be about elevated awareness, imagination, caring and sensitivity. By publicly sharing in art lives we make it easier for more people to participate in art. Why art? Because it's one of the best ways we have to explore life, communicate and share with others, and support and improve life...

...Custodial: taking care of—and Aesthetics: satisfying form and order... not just in art but in life. Why would we think there is a difference? Is there any aspect of life that we wouldn't want to take care of, wouldn't want to have in satisfying order?

Why make art? For me, it is the same as "why live?" We have arisen into opportunity to be aware, to care, and to create meaning in action. I say play it for all we're worth.

Why settle for less?

## Abraham Lincoln's Words

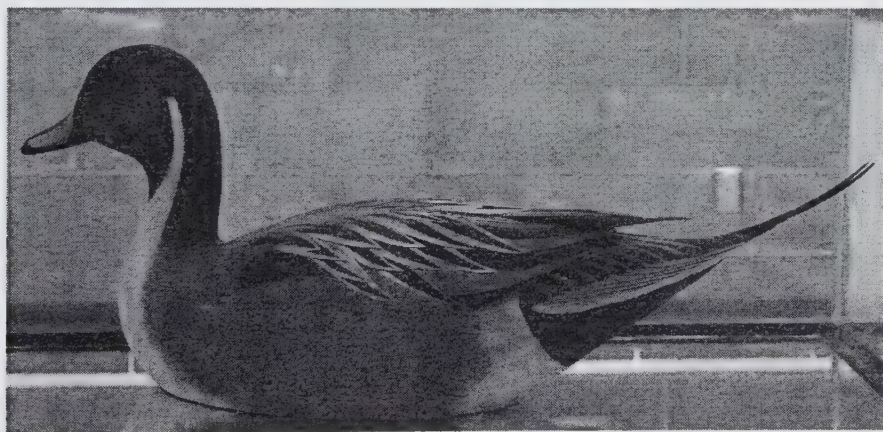
*adapted by Kim Stafford*

When Abraham Lincoln was wearied by the ways of government, sometimes in the evening he would climb a great tree to find some peace and puzzle through the ways of the living. I found him there, and asked his help in looking forward. He paused, looked far away, and this is what he said.

Four score and seven years from now our descendants will inherit on this continent an older earth conceived in diversity and dedicated to the recognition that all creatures live as one. Now we are engaged in a great struggle, testing whether this creation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. We are met in a great community for that struggle. We have come to dedicate a portion of our grief as a final resting-place for those creatures who gave their lives departing from this creation. It is fitting and proper that we should do this. In a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this creation. The desperate creatures, neglected children, vibrant cultures and local ways of being, living and dead, who struggled here have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The whole earth will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what we now choose to do. It is for us the living rather to be dedicated to the unfinished work which they who struggled and lost here have thus far so painfully clarified. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us that from these tattered beauties we take increased devotion to that cause for which they lost their last full measure of living witness and of song that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not be joined by an endless parade of others long in splendor, suddenly gone, that this whole earth shall have a new birth in welcome to its own, and that reconciliation of all creatures, by all creatures, for all creatures shall not perish from the earth.

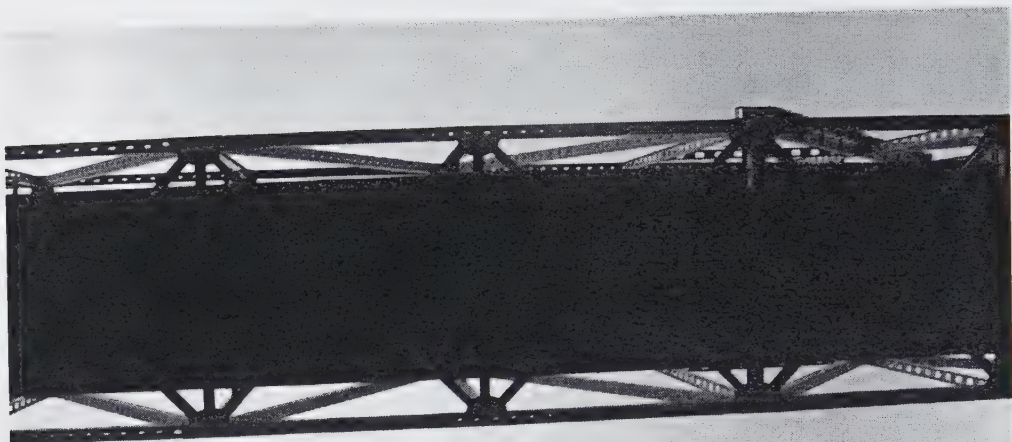


Kim Stafford, Israel Nebeker, Teri Sund, Richard Rowland and guests - *photo by Caitlin Wright*



Carved wooden duck - *Bill Antilla*





Middle right: Bill Antilla and Richard Rowland on the MV Forerunner - *photos by Casey Ruic*



## River of Gifts

*David Lee Myers*

Our great river is older than the hills, older than the volcanoes flanking its great stem, older than the thrust up coastal range it cuts through, more ancient than the basaltic cliffs it flows between. Its splendor today arouses us, and reminds us where we are, and when. Just yesterday people knew it as Wauna, today as Columbia, and always as a River of Gifts.

What gifts?

Columbia's gifts have long been food, transportation, and water. And a spiritual presence.



*photo by Amy Willis*

A spiritual presence? A reminder that we are part of other peoples, of other places, of a bigger nature. Our story is one thread in the weaving.

Columbia and its Salmon connect us to mountain snows and streams, and to gravel beds for wild salmon eggs. Columbia and its Salmon connect us to electric turbines,

to irrigated fields and orchards. Great ships trade with the world, while wheat barges and tough little fishboats feed the world. Above all, Columbia and Salmon connect us to the people who lived here before us, and to the people who will live here after us.

Columbia is our canvas, to paint lives of looking, wandering, and working, exploring currents and winds and hidden sloughs, exploring our own strength and skill. Columbia is our freedom to see so much more than ourselves, and learn a little. She is our independence to work, to fish against the odds, and prevail, our freedom to choose, for better, for worse, and learn a little.

Columbia's steadfast rift through the mountains ushers the oceanic rains inland, and the continental cold to the coast, season by season. Each nuance of weathered skies shows its own textures and colors: The fierce beauty pierces the veil of words and concerns which consume our daily efforts, offering to expand the reach of our perception and caring. Even after a century of industrialization, She lives with a touch of wildness, of power and form beyond our control.

A strange yet needed gift is reproach: A reproach for our shortsightedness, For our militant opportunism, as we sacrificed so much of the future for a little advantage just now.

In a world so marred by human destructiveness, awaken to a Columbia dawn: Awaken into refreshed awareness that we can do well, awaken into refreshed awareness that we can do good. And when the day is done, a Columbia dusk reassures that much is still right with the world, so we may sleep well.

Can we live mindfully and find a thoughtful balance between utilization and wildness? What happens when we live here as if living here matters? As if living matters, as if here matters? As if the past matters. As if the future matters. For the grandchildren, for generations beyond numbering. We were born into the opportunity to be aware, to care, and to create meaning in action. For the love of life, I say, play it for all it's worth. Is there any reason to settle for less?

## Blessing (delivered at Fort Columbia)

*Robert Michael Pyle*

Friends, come together here out of a common love of land and literature, as exemplified in this great and most suitable honoring of our brother Kim Stafford and his work and words, may we seek and deserve the benisons of this place and all who dwell here, have dwelled here, and will dwell here in times to come. May all of our passages be safe and bring us back together as your well-fortuned crossing of the Great River today has done.

I love the application of the term “custodial” to our joint vision of how to live in this place, informed by eloquent listening and elegant attending. When I was a lad, people were careful to distinguish between the words “janitor” and “custodian” for the person who performed the essential task of keeping our school clean and in order. The latter term was considered more respectful and substantial, while “janitor” was thought somehow demeaning, almost derogatory, as if denoting a menial worker, though they applied to the very same person and job. But I always liked “janitor,” and when I worked as Northwest Land Steward for The Nature Conservancy, cleaning up the messes and management problems on the preserved around the region, I called myself “janitor to the land.” In fact, though the two words have separate roots, they convey much the same meaning: janitor from the Latin *janud*, meaning door, denoting the doorkeeper or caretaker of a building; custodian from the Latin *custodia*, meaning a watch or guard, for a guardian or keeper of a public building.

So by either term, we are speaking of one who has the privilege of keeping a place—whether by building, rebuilding, growing, writing, depicting, or protecting one’s home from unsuitable futures. Janitor, custodian, writer, potter, or lover, what we do when we accept this role of keeper is to sing our place into being—and if we listen, it sings back to us. And so in blessing, I would share with you Pattiann Rogers’ poem “The Singing Place,” in which she invokes the crickets, the sage grouse, the bulb and tuber, the big black slug, and the places where they each sing. She says: “Breath, I believe, / is place...And place, / I think, is moments in motion”; “utter stillness is a singing / place too.”

And so, in breath, in these moments in motion, and in utter stillness, let us sing this place into being, and allow it to sing us whole again.



*We still know who we are and where we  
come from and that can never be given away.*

*- Moquate, (Ghost That Walks On Water)*



*Moquate, Ray Gardner, Chairman, Chinook Nation - photo by Sunny Cook*



# Howling Dog Moon

*David Campiche*

*Howling Dog Moon, he said. Tonight the bay will be full of Dog Sharks. During Harvest Moon, he further reflected, that's the Salmon Moon, the time the swimmers come home.*

On the evening Cal Ripken  
Broke baseball's and Lou Gehrig's  
Consecutive games record,  
I picked bull rushes with John Joseph  
In knee-deep mud, mired in Young's Bay  
—picked bull rushes  
Beside and under a freeway,  
Galloping along unsure  
Of its true destination  
—picked bull rushes as faces  
From autos leaned down and found me askance. God,  
The questions they asked. Only John knew his purpose:  
Bring reeds to Cedar Woman, the old Makah,  
Weaver of grass mats.

The sky had molted lavender and gray,  
As if winter waited  
Lean and wizened on the flank,  
An army of gray, a jihad of gray.

Howling Dog Moon, he said  
As a full moon  
Doused the landscape with glitter,  
Flouncing shards of light across  
Broken wave tops, jittering  
Like Monet brushstrokes.

Late that night I woke to silence.  
The vanilla moon was full. I caught the face  
And wondered, salmon or dog shark?

Visioned the ringed black eyes  
Of the Swimmers.  
There, I made a choice: Silverside.

Remembered John bent double  
His belly hunkering  
Inches above the mud. His pony tail  
Ebony going silver.  
His face happy.  
His eyes far.

Above, the modern world  
Slid by, wheels spinning,  
Anointed with speed.

Dog sharks, I thought,

Waiting  
For  
The  
Moon.



David Campiche, Nancy Cook, and Baby Izi - *photo by Sunny Cook*

## Closing

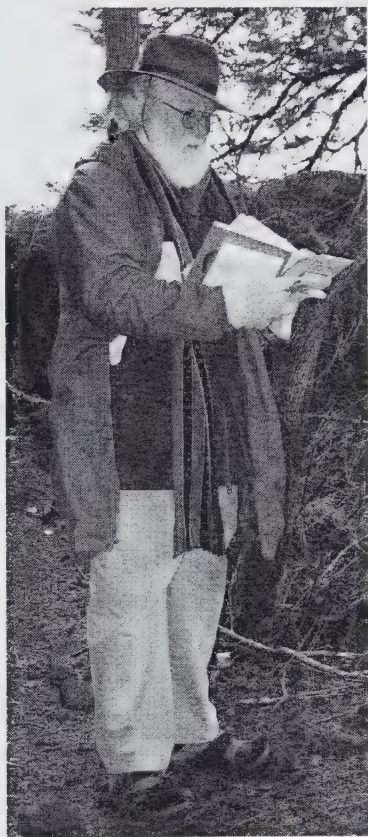
### *Robert Michael Pyle*

What an honor and a pleasure to dwell this morning here in the home of the Chinook people, the salmon, the spruce, and the banana slug.

In his introduction to the sole issue *The Sullivan Slough Review*, entitled "The Thoughts Of A Turtle Are All Turtles," the poet Robert Sund said this: "The modern poem... is unable to move in ways distinctly its own. It can crawl like a caterpillar or drift on the wind like pollen, almost invisible; it can take steps like a night-time animal.... The movement of a poem, like a river, is where it takes us, where we are when we come to the end of the poem, and where we go from there."

In his introduction to *Having Everything Right*, entitled "Naming the Northwest," the poet Kim Stafford said this: "I want to live in that place by water the Kwakiutl call, in the Boas transcription, he'lade.... This name means Having Everything Right is a portable name, an expandable place. It could be what we call earth. But it will not, unless we sift from our habits the nourishing ways: listening, remembering, telling, and weaving a rooted companionship with home ground. I have to make my place upriver deserve that name." I have never read words more apt, or more beautiful.

To bring this honoring of our brother to a close, and toward seeking our own rooted companionship with our own home ground, I would like to invoke each voice here, Let us take three minutes of utter silence and reflection and attention to this place. Then let us form a circle, and for those who which, let us issue a river of words; speak just where the river has taken us? Where are we now that we have come to the end of this poem? And where will we go from here?



Robert Michael Pyle at closing - photo by Sunny Cook



Kim Stafford Listening Eloquently - *photo by Caitlin Wright*

**END**



# 40 YEARS OF RAIN

Spring 2008 marks the 40th Anniversary of **RAIN Magazine**, which began under the title **Expression** and was published by faculty, students and friends of Clatsop Community College nearly continuously through four decades of literary and artistic history. Displayed in the next few pages are historic covers from all the years the magazine was published, plus some peeks inside.

Kudos to all who kept the tradition thriving through all these years.

We hope you enjoy this trip down the memory lane of **RAIN**!



1968



1969

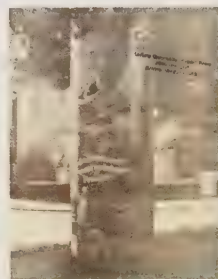


1970

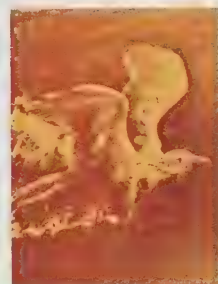
Ink Drawing by Kathy Keiski from 1970



1971



1972



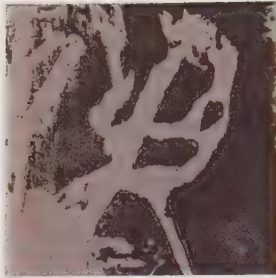
1973



1974



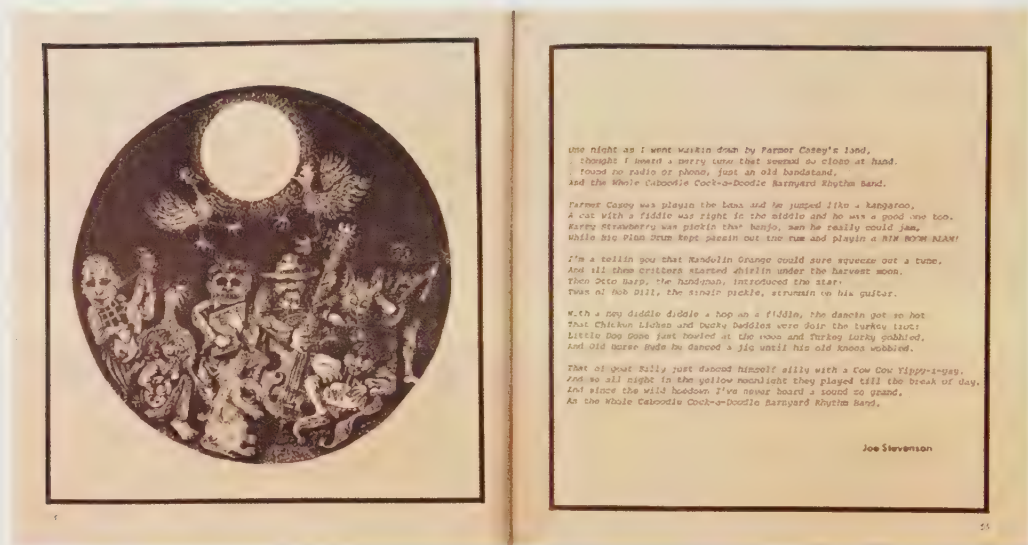
1975



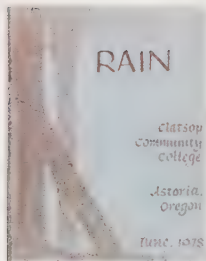
1976



1977



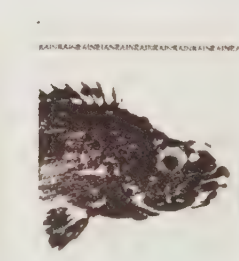
## Art and Text from Rain 1976



1978



1979



1980



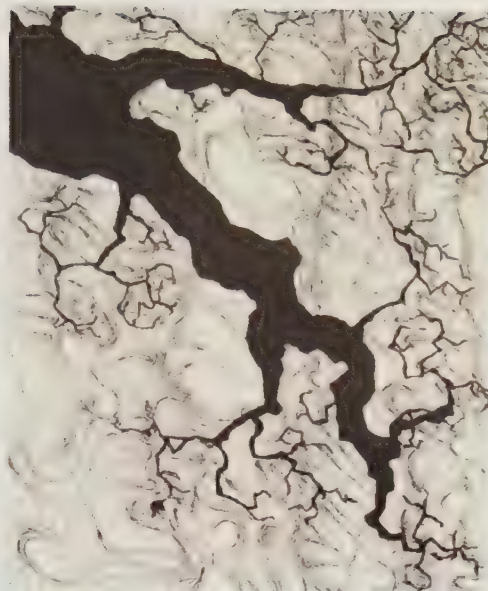
1981



1982



1985



Art from Rain 1981



1983



Rain Rain Rain Rain Rain

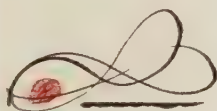
1993

Pie Pie Pie Pie Pie



1994

Rain



1995



1996



1997



Art from Rain 1995





Rain

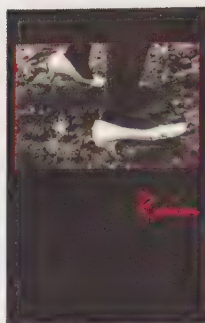
Editor: Anna Schmitt, Editor: Sylvia Schmitt

1998



Rain 1999

1999



2000



2001



2002



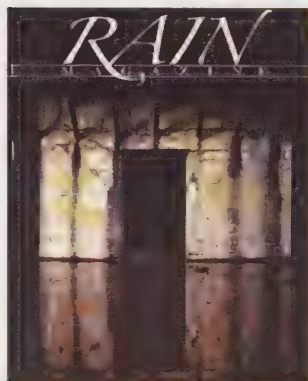
2003



2004



2005



2006



2007

**Let it RAIN, Let it RAIN, Let it RAIN!**



## This is a Peace Poem

*Pattra Burnetto Monroe*

dwelling in the canyon  
of red sand stone  
we marked our houses  
with characters  
befitting our desires  
if we were sad  
we chose happiness  
or a sign for  
deeper sorrow  
wanting to go  
to the bottom  
of the well  
we were the  
red sand people  
our neighbors  
were from  
blue cloud gulch  
they were  
a two day walk  
from us  
we did not  
own cars  
anymore  
there was no fuel  
we did not  
fight any more  
there was  
no need

## **For The Love Of A Fisherman**

*Pattra Burnetto Monroe*

My Bathroom  
Smells  
Like The Ocean  
Deep, Salty,  
Briny Air  
Even Clean  
His Wet Clothes  
Smell Of Fish  
And Sea

My Kitchen Sink  
Is Full Of Shells  
With Critters Still Intact  
The Fisherman  
Has Brought Them Home  
For His Sweetheart  
Who Loves Them Both  
The Salty Seaman  
And The Wild Ocean

And I Am Witness  
To Their Love And Hate  
Their Comings  
And Their Goings  
Their Separations  
And Togetherness  
As Turbulent  
As The Ocean

## Mary of North Head

*Jon Schmidt*

*(recently unearthed from a pine box, beach-combed on the Long Beach Peninsula, the Winter of 2004; no other contents were enclosed.)*

My Mary, oh my Mary blonde and straight as she ever was,  
She's in my dreams as she ever was.  
Her way with everyone seemed to float right through them, into them;  
all with (their full) unconscious consent.  
The steps were steep and circular and often wet  
from the rains that leaked through the brick and concreted tower.  
It was the wind that blew things overboard,  
swished ships on their sides and swept the headlands.  
It was the rain that blew straight up the cliffs  
drops the size of Salal berries, at 100 miles per hour.  
The sun cracked through from time to time, if the fog didn't swallow it up first.  
The garden did alright, when the slugs were pre-occupied.  
When it wasn't time for laundry or feeding kids, chickens, horses or men,  
it was attempting to get a walk in, at least once a week.  
This was rare; more often her walks were less frequent than necessary  
to maintain her inner sanctum.  
Her gut, her lungs, her joints needed to stretch, to indulge in fresh air from time to time.  
Fresh air was all around her; blowing through the Spruce and Hemlock boughs,  
with the hint of wet feet that she yearned for.  
That free and lost self (that was) she left when she went to school.  
We can chatter all we want, yet the wind will suck the meaning away.  
We can shuffle through the woods, but they too can blow away.  
When the ships cross that bar with their fingers across themselves,  
the swells out there are the size of houses, with the foam reaching up to here.  
It's time to quit. Hide in the womb of house and home.  
The logs we burn tonight are from last year's storms.

## End of the West

*Jon Schmidt*

Standing in awe at the end of the West,  
waiting and watching the waves crest  
at the cemetery of the sea.  
With the rolling souls of the deep  
at the foot of ancient basalt headstones  
and above shifting coffins of sand.  
Like a lost hawk circling down,  
like gray water hungry for more bones.  
Here where the river and ocean collide  
is the mouth that both bites and feeds us.  
While we the living shiver  
at this cruel justice of she who takes no sides.



River Traffic

*LaRee Johnson*



# Everything Goes Downstream

*Mary Tanguay Webb*

My people come from water places. Brest, Cork, Galveston,  
folk with salt on their skin and a mist in their eyes.  
When I was thirty-four we moved to Clear Creek.  
It was no the sea but it was lovely and it was water.

We didn't kick the foundation or check the septic. Should have.  
I lusted for that tiny house, the trees, the bank over the Creek.  
The want made me taste blood in my mouth.  
Somehow we swung it.

The baby sat in a cardboard box while we moved in.  
The big boys grinned at the water.

On Clear Creek they fished, swam and were as free  
As anything Twain could think up.  
That first summer, when we were still new, we floated  
Our baby, naked on an inner tube.

I told the boys that the Creek went into the Clackamas and  
Clackamas went into the Willamette and the Willamette  
went into the Columbia and the Columbia flowed past Astoria  
and on out to sea.  
I told them to beware, everything goes downstream.  
And I told them I would live on Clear Creek until I was an old woman.

We came to know crawdads and fresh water clams,  
Mountain boomers and river otter and Blue Heron  
and Kingfishers and every kind of duck. Caddis flies,  
beaver and eels (wouldn't let the boys swim until  
the eels had gone in late spring.  
The Clackamas down at the Falls in Oregon City used to catch them  
And dry the for winter.)  
The steelhead came battling up the reach each September  
like noisy, thrashing dogs  
and spawned beneath our creek deck  
In Spring, the Creek settled down from the floods and the water cleared.

In Summer the boys had a rope swing off a sagging Alder.  
In the Fall the Creek turned brackish with tannin.  
In Winter the water rose and was, at times, as fierce as the Ocean  
And then it all cycled over again, with slight variations.  
For twenty-eight years.

In twenty-eight years all sorts of things happened.  
The Viet Nam War ended. Mt. St. Helens blew and we took the boys  
up to the Springwater Grange and watched from the car.

I took two dogs from cradle to grave  
And started on a new one. My brother died.  
We put his ashes in the creek and we could see them on the bottom  
for a whole year afterwards.

The boys grew up  
And fell in love and fell in love and fell in love.  
And the grandbabies came and came and came.  
And there were parties and picnics and new children who looked like us  
or didn't.  
And all those Christmases.  
There was joy and fear and loss and great happiness  
and the gnashing of teeth.  
Life. And much more.

I did live on Clear Creek in to my sixties  
and then, we, too went downstream  
to Astoria, to the sea.

I look out my window now and I see the mooring basin,  
The South Jetty, The North Jetty , Cape Disappointment,  
most of the shipping channel and the waves off Clatsop Spit.  
I know I am home.  
And that Clear Creek flows by us still.

## Himself

*Judith Woodward*

The forecast was for 99 degrees. We planned to scrape and sand the south side of my house. No shade. At 8:30, heat already radiated from the siding. Since Mom had dropped him off a half hour ago, Dad had been hunched over the electric sander, muttering and puttering, fussing that it wouldn't work right. I squatted beside him.

"What's wrong, Dad?"

"I need a different kind of disc." He held up the sander he'd used yesterday. It took Velcro-backed sandpaper—all you had to do was slap the sandpaper onto the disc and turn on the sander. "This one won't work," he said. "I need one with a hole in it, you know, so you can screw the sandpaper in."

"Why? This one worked yesterday. Here. Here's some of that sandpaper with the Velcro on it. Use this."

"It doesn't work," he insisted.

I didn't know why it wouldn't work. Tools with motors scared me, even little ones like hand mixers, because they seemed to burn up when I used them. So I avoided them. On the rare occasions I decided I did need to know how to do something—like run a power saw—Dad would say, "You don't need to know that. I'll do it for you." He was the handyman for the women in his life. Dad would put the new shelves in the armoire, Dad would hang the new door.

Now he drifted through the garage, poking through piles of gardening supplies and peering under rags.

"Can I help you find something, Dad?"

"I've got another disc around here somewhere. You know, one with a hole in it."

Impatient to get some work done, I left him to the search. It never occurred to me to wonder why he thought he had the other kind of disc in my garage.

By 9:30, my scraping arm was already stiff, the backs of my knees burning in the early heat. Sweat tickled its way slowly from my hand to my elbow and into my armpit. Standing on the ladder, I sneaked looks at Dad. His silver head was bent to the task of poking through brown paper bags and old peanut butter jars full of screws and bolts and nuts. In the dimness of the garage, his slight, still-wiry figure strode back and forth a dozen times between the bags and jars as he assembled and disassembled the

pieces of his sander. He seemed to have given up looking for the disc with the hole in it and was trying to find another way to fix the tool.

I wondered how we would ever finish painting my house and garage in two weeks—my only vacation from work.

He's wasting time, I fumed. Or worse, he'll ruin the sander, and then I'll catch hell from Mom—one more item to replace, along with all the jackets and sweaters he's lost. I should have known I was expecting too much from him.

I climbed down and joined him in the garage, kneeling on the cool cement floor.

"Hey, Dad, anything I can do to help?"

"No, no, you go on back to what you were doing. I'll take care of this." His usual answer. It's so hard to accept that the Alzheimer's has robbed him of what gives his life purpose—the ability to help those he loves.

As I stepped back up the ladder, Dad called, "Where's Vern?"

For some reason, Dad always remembered my next-door neighbor. At seventy-five, Vern was a few years older than Dad and still worked part-time as a barber. Like Dad, he worked endlessly around the house and yard and approached tasks with the same do-it-yourself attitude.

"Is Vern home?" Dad called again.

"I think so," I said. "This is his day off."

Dad trotted next door. I heard two male voices rumble on for 20 minutes or so, then Dad returned with Vern's sander. But he didn't turn it on. Instead, he unscrewed a piece from it, and in another few minutes, I heard the whir of a motor. By 10:30, Dad was happily sanding the siding. "Oh, for the life of a sailor, with a girl in every port," he sang at the top of his tuneless lungs.

Ten minutes later, the motor stopped.

"Where's the wrench?" Dad asked as he climbed down his ladder.

"In the tool box, in the garage," I replied. "What's wrong?"

"Oh, nothing. I just have to tighten this bolt a bit."

I held my breath, my scraping arm suspended in the air, as Dad twisted the bolt hard. I'd buy a new part for Vern's sander if I had to.

He returned to his place on the ladder, started the sander and said with a contented



smile, "Ah, that's better. Now we're getting somewhere." Then again the song, "Oh, for the life of a sailor, with a girl in every port!"

A few minutes later he stopped and asked me where the wrench was, climbed down the ladder, tightened the bolt, climbed up the ladder and returned to sanding, again with a satisfied, "Ah, that's better. Now we're getting somewhere" and "Oh, for the life of a sailor!"

The ritual continued for the rest of the morning. By 1:00, we gave in to the heat and quit. We'd scraped and sanded only a few square yards.

I drove him home. He leaned back in the seat beside me, eyes closed, a slight smile crinkling the corners of his eyes. I knew I should be happy that he was content, but I chafed at our slow progress. Maybe the missing disc with the hole in it would help.

"We don't have a sander that uses a disc with a hole in it," Mom told me. "We used to, but a few years ago we bought him one that uses Velcro-backed paper. I remember, though, there was another time Dad fussed about that disc. It was when he ran out of sandpaper with the proper grit."

I looked at him through tears as he sat quietly in his armchair, eyes closed, apparently unaware of the conversation. His sander had not been broken. He'd simply run out of coarse sandpaper for it. He'd been trying to use coarse paper for another type of sander that he'd found in a tool box.

I pictured him in the garage. He was absorbed, deliberate. Not bored. Not frustrated. I was the frustrated one.

As Dad slowly lost lifelong skills to disease, he seemed to be losing what made him my father, thereby losing himself. But the events of this day made clear that his problem-solving self still existed. He knew why the sander didn't work and eventually fixed it to his satisfaction. His only limitation, other than not seeing the obvious solution of using Vern's sander intact, was that he couldn't explain the problem or how he wanted to solve it. And that wasn't so different from the way he'd always been.

About a year before he died, I bought a houseboat. When he came to visit, he would sit for hours on the wide, sunny deck, watching the boats sail up and down the river. Did he remember our racing days—the main sheet burning his palm as the sail filled with a sudden gust, the cold spray in his face as we beat into a squall? I didn't ask, and he rarely talked by then.

I was renovating my little floating home and, in the process, removed the cedar tongue-and-groove boards from the old ceiling. It seemed wasteful to burn such good wood, as it probably could be used again. Dad took an interest in the work, and after

he had offered several times to help, my contractor suggested Dad might be able to pull nails from the boards to prepare them for storage.

Mom brought him out one lovely April day. The air was cool, the cottonwoods across the river were leafed in their bright new green, and when the sun burst through fat clouds, the south-facing deck was warm, the world at peace. I set him up with the boards and a hammer and went inside to talk to Mom, hoping she could take a break from her caregiver's role. But her eyes would slide from my face to her husband outdoors, and then she would jump from her chair and dash to the deck to suggest that he change this or that so he could finish more quickly.

His forehead creased and his mouth set in a grim line, though he said nothing. Finally, I suggested to Mom that she relax with a book while I helped Dad.

I'd never spent time pulling nails, and my first few attempts cracked and split the boards. Dad, on the other hand, was preserving the boards and most of the nails, which he managed to pull straight out. His thick fingers, still calloused from a lifetime of working with his hands, grasped the board and hammer firmly. His movements were smooth, almost rhythmic, as he hooked and pulled a nail, tossed it in the bucket, and slid the board six inches to find the next nail. I watched his technique, then copied what he did. I couldn't keep the nails straight, but I split only a couple of boards after that.

We spent the next hour pulling nails, silent companions, the sun warming our backs. Then a breeze stirred, rustling the leaves of the cottonwoods across the river.

"Listen," Dad said. "The wind."

Both of us sailors looked up to watch the change.

## Fish and Finns

*Wanda Derby*

Ho, to my ancestors  
Fishers of the water  
The staple of our diet  
That keeps the babies quiet  
Prepared in every manner  
Leaving the tongue to ponder  
Smoked, fried, boiled or fresh  
Whichever way, it will be the best.



Big Red

*LaRee Johnson*

## Poems From Netul

*Cyndi Mudge*

### **1. Gone**

A floating heirloom  
Set adrift  
Once pulsing with pride  
Forecasting good fortunes ahead  
Now these timbers  
Moss soaked, lean-to  
Another tide

### **2. Canoe**

Slipped into the water  
It was transformed  
On land, a hollowed vessel  
Resting from its last journey  
But a new day and new blessing  
Sends her gliding through rippling tides  
Sleek as any whale  
Cutting gracefully past the bow of the land



## Too Much to Carry

*Vera Wildauer*

This morning I found  
the leavings of a hundred lives  
storm-strewn ashore.

The usual things  
floats in red and white  
or neon colors  
pulsing against the gray  
bits of yellow rope  
empty water bottles  
shaped like floats.

But, then there was the gallon jug of milk--half full--  
a jar of spaghetti sauce  
and one of instant coffee.

Three light bulbs, one plain 60 watt,  
and two enormous globes from some giant's lamp.

One tire.

One sturdy gray rubber glove.

One empty tool box.

One shoe.

I turned around when I found  
three counterfeit ducks  
bobbing in the froth,  
looking west and longing.

## Casting Off Childhood

*Brian F. Harrison*

Green morning waters  
awash in the skins  
of mayfly larvae,  
shed on the way  
to adulthood.

One day, maybe two,  
ravenously sexual  
and they're gone.  
Ephemeroptera.

The lake's shoulders wear  
to granite dust, rising  
to invoke such millennial  
sunsets as mayflies  
and I might admire  
to keep our dreams afloat.

## History in the Sand

*Shannon Jones*

Looking over the sand dunes onto the Fort Stevens coastline, a familiar sight comes into view. A deteriorated wreckage of rusted metal lies half-buried in the ocean shore. Since 1906 we have seen the remains of the Peter Iredale peeking out from beneath surf like a child buried in the sand waiting patiently for the day freedom will come and release it from its coastal bed. One storm buried the vessel and another storm resurrected it in 1999, when a sandy gale blew over the beach and dug up the remains. According to David and Janice Crawford, residents of Hammond since 1966, today we see more of the ship than we have seen in almost a century. The Peter Iredale is “history uncovered.”

The Oregon Coast is known for its dangerous bar and hazardous weather conditions. Since the early 1900's there have been 199 shipwreck victims to the Columbia River bar. One of the most famous wrecks is the Peter Iredale located at Fort Stevens in Hammond, Oregon. The rustic ship has a rich history of obstacles, beginning with an encounter with the Columbia River bar, and ending with its losing battle with the Oregon coast storm that led to its sandy grave. Now the rusty remains stand as a beautiful landmark that brings in tourists from all over the world to photograph and awe at its marvel. From the day it was constructed to the day it was buried in the sand at Clatsop Beach, the Peter Iredale displayed sturdy craftsmanship. The shipwreck survived an attack from Japanese submarines during WW2; an armory of men protected her from being salvaged in 1960, and she stands strong as a playground for children that come visit her remains. For almost 100 years, the Peter Iredale remains and continues to be a sturdy landmark. James A. Gibbs said it best: “Men have come and gone, lighthouses have been built and abandoned, military posts manned and closed down, wars fought and won, but the wreck of the Peter Iredale lives on.

In 1890, the “Peter Iredale was ordered by Peter Iredale & Porter Ltd., a medium-sized shipping line out of Liverpool, England and built by Ristons, a shipbuilding company in Peter Iredale's hometown of Maryport, England.” A 278-foot vessel mounted on steel plates, the ship was a “4-masted steel barque of 2075 gross registered tons.” The Peter Iredale was used mostly for cargo trade, and was “one of the sleekest ships of her time...a true Cape Horn”. This ship served a decade and a half before its final sail of 1906 to the Columbia River bar.

On the final voyage from Salina Cruz, Mexico to Portland, Oregon, the ship was occupied by a crew of 25 and 2 stow-aways. On October 25, 1906 it was sailed by Captain Harry Lawrence, a man “who was no stranger to the ship”; he had previously sailed the Peter Iredale during 1900-1901). The voyage was chartered to Balfour,

Guthrie & Company and was on the way to be loaded with wheat, but the ship was overtaken by a harsh storm at Clatsop Beach. Due to that violent encounter it caused her to "lose her upper spars, which came crashing down to the deck". According to James Gibbs, author of *Shipwrecks of the Pacific Coast*:

The vessel's hull was little damaged from stranding and an air of optimism brought high hopes of salvage. It was planned to tow the ship, stern first, through the breakers into deep water. Nature was, however, the superior force and finally the underwriters had to admit defeat. They paid the ship's full insurance value.

All the crew and stow-aways were safely rescued. The only fatality that the coast saw from this incident was that of Warrentonian Malcolm Grinder. He was rowing out around the Peter Iredale, when he fell out of his boat and drowned. "Captain Lawrence was cleared by an official Court of Enquiry of negligence," stating that he was not at fault for the wreck. Seaside resident Tom Scott told me that he was amazed how the shoreline has changed so much in the past 100 years, to realize that the Peter Iredale could have just run aground. He said that it would be hard to imagine now a ship just beaching there on the coast.

Nearly 40 years later, the Peter Iredale was the center of a Japanese attack on Ft. Stevens during WW2. Sullivan states:

In 1942 the sand here was no man's-land. Observation towers with searchlights and machine guns scanned the beach. On the night of June 21, the lookouts were the closest witnesses of the Japanese attack. When they called for permission to fire, the officers told them their machine guns could not possibly reach a target so far out to sea.

Enemy shells were shot from Japanese submarines onto abandoned fields. No one was injured and the Peter Iredale once again proved how well built it was.

On June 3, 1960 the vessel was the center of a hostile takeover effort. Cliff Hendricks of Oregon City tried to take claim of the Peter Iredale with the plan to salvage the ships remains. In response, city manager E.R. Baldwin set up an armory next to the wreck. "Just let anyone try to get his pea-pickin' pinkies on this thing". Needless to say the Peter Iredale remained property of Warrenton, as it does today.

Almost 63 years after the Japanese invaded Fort Stevens, the Peter Iredale still remains a breath-taking sight. In 1999, the 100-year anniversary of the death of the shipowner, Peter Iredale, a huge storm unearthed the half-buried ship. "The same Pacific storms, which drove 'his' ship into the beach at Clatsop cleared her of sand a century later and resurrected her". With the 100-year anniversary [just past] the vessel remains a landmark and beautiful sight on the Oregon Coast. "The Peter Iredale may be the most photographed shipwreck anywhere."





Chinook

*Kitty Paino*

## Traffic Report

*Gail Balden*

With so many of our families far-flung across the country, I feel fortunate that my daughter lives on the Oregon coast and can join me on hikes up Neahkahnie Mountain. On the road to the trailhead recently, we heard a traffic report on a Portland radio station. "Traffic is backed up on 26 eastbound from the cemetery to the tunnel. Westbound on the Banfield, traffic is slow to the curves."

I thought of those city folks sitting behind the wheel of their cars, bumper-to-bumper, creeping along, nervous fingers tapping on the steering wheel. I was grateful that my car was the only one headed north to the turn-off for Neahkahnie Mountain trail. The only traffic I had to worry about was foot traffic, and at 7 a.m. on the mountain, there wasn't much of that.

When I first moved to the coast I used to hear, "You're so lucky to live here." My response was always the same, "Luck has nothing to do with it. It's my lifestyle choice." I like to support our local economy. We have plenty of fine businesses and medical personnel right here in our small towns. Gas prices have gone out of sight, so I'm not one of those people who heads to Portland at the drop of a hat. When I live in a small town, I live in a small town.

Recently at one of my writing workshops, two women said they had purposefully arranged their lives so that they could they could spend all or some of their time on the coast by water and mountains. "It's a place where I can breathe the cleanest air on earth. It nourishes my soul," said one. "When I'm here, I relax and my creativity flourishes," said another. "When I called to register for your workshop," one woman said, "a real person answered the phone, and she was so warm and welcoming." Another related the story of getting her car stuck in the sand on the beach at Gearhart.

With the tide coming in, she panicked and called 911. A man appeared with all the equipment needed and soon had her on her way. "He was so friendly and helpful," she said. She was surprised to learn that he was not from the towing company; he was simply a Good Samaritan who regularly swept the beach to make sure no one was stuck. "I'm still amazed," she said. I was amazed too—amazed that friendliness, simple courtesy and helpfulness seemed unusual rather than the norm.

On the mountain, my daughter and I—between gasps of air—iron out life's problems, laugh and catch up on daily happenings. We rest a few minutes at the top before heading back down the trail. I am grateful that once again, my old dog Buddy

makes it up and back, even if a bit slowly. I cherish the memory of the day's hike--yellow violets nestled under trees, trillium climbing up hillsides, delicate pink fawn lilies sprinkled among mossy crevices. I'm grateful for the wrens that sweetly sing their hearts out in musical bursts as if to tell the entire world that spring is here. A robin accompanies us on the way down, hopping ahead on the trail with its greeting, "cheerio" as if to say "this way, this way." After a cloudy start, the sun comes out, and rays of light filter through the magical green forest. Below us, the bucolic setting of our little villages nestled by sea and river looks like a grand painting.

As I drive the car down from the trailhead to the intersection of Highway 101, I look to the north--no cars. Then I look to the south--no cars. I know it won't always be like this, but for today, I can go anytime. "Traffic backed up on 26 eastbound from the cemetery to the tunnel" seems far away. Still, the words, cemetery, tunnel and curves describe locations in the city we all recognize even here on the coast. "By the deli, at the blinking light, up the mountain...". Maybe there isn't that much difference between small towns and big cities after all. Except, that is, for the traffic backup

## Dumpster Diver

*David Densmore*

I see him there rummaging through the dumpster  
A nomad, in the land of Things.  
His needs are so basic,  
Doesn't take much to make him sing.

As I watch from my SUV  
Sipping a Latte so fine,  
A vague unease comes over me  
A trickle of guilt flows through my mind.

Most simply see him as a bum  
If they don't just look right through.  
But suddenly I see him in a different light,  
Maybe, his is the thing to do.

He doesn't worry about paying taxes,  
Or the rising price of gas.  
And the pain of watching a new car growing old,  
Really makes him laugh.

I think he's learned the secret  
Of how foolish, most things we hold so dear.  
He'll never notice the rising costs  
That give the rest of us cause to fear.

Cause we're afraid we can't afford or have,  
What someone else has got.  
All the while he knows the truth,  
The whole damn bunch ain't worth a lot.

I wonder if he's not the smart one  
To actually just let it go.  
Doesn't need the flashy stuff,  
Or care about putting on a show.



Just needs a little something for his belly  
And a warm hidden place to sleep.  
The rest of the foolish lot,  
The whole damn world can keep.

Suddenly my stress level seems on overload.  
For what I struggle, I just can't say.  
So many times I feel I'm barely hanging on,  
Simply want to lose it all and walk away.

And as I watch, can't help but wonder,  
Who's the fool, and who really has the guts.  
He's fought clear of needless attachments,  
So which of us, actually has given up.



Under The Ferns *Kirsten Horning*

**Rainy Days Billy Traces His Reflection**  
**on the Window with a Sticky Finger**

*Debra Brimacombe*

but today lavender  
stopped the chase. The dogs,

just short of baying,  
and already yards ahead,

circled back,  
heads low and cocked,

noses up as Billy ripped  
a fistful of flowering

spikes from the lavender hedge,  
smeared them against his bare

belly and whispered, oh,  
then slapping

the crumpled blooms  
from his hands

and thrusting a palm at the sky  
like an empty plate,

demanding I see.

## Taken

*Debra Brimacombe*

In the distance I thought I saw  
a woman kneeling,  
face lifted  
to the sea,  
breasts a cast of waves;  
the canto release of her voice  
like grey contours of wind.

But she became nothing,  
as I approached—  
a weathered stump stuck in sand,

a flourish of upturned roots,  
and like the snarl of fishing line  
tangled there, I took  
a seat on one lateral root, hooked  
my toe around the tap  
and sank, ravished  
by the wind.

## Wind

*Debra Brimacombe*

Slam  
against my body.  
Lift my shirttail and flap. Wrap  
me in westerlies and whine  
in my ears until I  
like a flame flare. I need to be carried.  
Take me.  
Bend me over backward in a field.  
Pluck pine and Sitka boughs  
until they, like crazed  
conductors, cavort,  
misleading  
a thousand symphonies at once  
then swirl me out over the sea and flaunt  
me like a sail. Rumble. Snap.  
Someday,  
when I'm a cloud, I'm going to roil  
and growl with you.



## Two Haiku

*John Ciminello*

Boot heels of the storm  
Hobnailed gray skidding from  
Toe hold of blue sky.

Still black water pond  
Reflects tree frog raven sky  
And all passing thoughts.



*Philip Smith*

# The Burning of Fort Clatsop

*Alex Dustin*

I'm sitting on my couch watching TV. As I'm staring at a fuzzy picture of Oprah, talking about something I could care less about, I get a strange feeling. This is a feeling I have felt many times. And then I hear it, "Beep, beep, beep, beeeeeeep!!!! Station 26, respond to a possible structure fire in the area of Fort Clatsop." Like a flash I'm out the door. My truck seems so far away. Something's wrong. My keys, where are my keys? As I turn to run back into the house I feel their hardness at the bottom of my pocket. It takes me only a few seconds to get to my truck and get it started but it feels like an hour. I hit the gas hard and my tires kick up dirt. I reach the end of my driveway and stop.

Silence, all I hear now is my heart beating and my uncontrollable breathing. It's very cold. My body is shaking but I must wait. Soon I see a glow coming from the end of my road. As I turn my head I see that it's headlights. The lights get closer and closer until, "Zoooom," my fire captain goes streaking by. Now I'm off, following closely behind but careful not to get too close.

It's cold and dark. My windows are fogged up and all I can see is the glow of tail-lights through the darkness. I'm sure that if an elk jumped out in front of me I would die. Without warning a cat comes out of nowhere. It's too close so swerve so I go right over top of it. I look back to see it run across the road. It must have gone between my tires. We continue on down our twisty, windy road and the whole time I'm on pins and needles looking for cats and elk.

Finally, the last stretch to the station. As we get closer I see the fire truck out front with its lights already on. I see Fred, our assistant chief, in the driver's seat. James is in the back. I get out of my truck and in one motion jump into the back, into the bed of my truck. In one load I grab my pants, helmet, jacket, mask, boots, and gloves. It's amazing what you can do under pressure. Todd is just getting into the passenger seat of the fire truck as I hop in its back. James is fairly new and looks quite frantic sitting in the back of the engine. I sit down next to him, and as calmly as I can, I say, "Hello, James." The tone of my voice says that it's just like any other day. "Hello," he answers back. There's a strange quality to his voice, but I ignore it.

Suddenly the truck jerks forward with its lights and siren going. I put my stuff on the seat next to me and stand up. My pants go on quite easily; the rest of my gear goes on easily as well. I see that James is staring at me. I sit down. I can see that Fred and Todd are talking and I can hear some radio talk so I open the sliding window. "What's going on, Todd? Is it a structure fire?"

"No, probably just a burn pile." I quickly relay the message to James.

"Do I need a passport tag, Alex?" I grab one off the ceiling and tell him to stick it to his helmet. I do the same. It's a foggy night and the lights are reflecting off the moisture in the air.

"What's going on, Alex?"

"I don't know. It's probably nothing." My nerves are starting to calm down and I can hear the wind go "Whooshing" by.

Suddenly I smell smoke. "Do you smell that, James?"

We both start looking around. And then I see something I never expected to see. To the east it looks like an atomic bomb has gone off. There is a huge glow and a mushroom cloud of smoke reaching towards the sky. The smell of smoke is heavy. James looks like he's in a trance, staring at the huge smoke column. I sit back in my seat and stay still. The blood is flowing through my body very quickly, down to my toes and up to my head. I can distinctly feel it pulsing, every inch of the way along its entire path.

Then I hear it. Ian, our fire chief, has arrived on scene. He says the magic words, "We have a fully involved structure fire." The address is said over the radio and to my shock it's Fort Clatsop. I turn to James who is waiting for me to tell him what is going on. "Fort Clatsop is on fire." Never in my life have I seen someone's eyes grow so big. It looks like he is about to go into shock. I turn towards the smoke column and then turn back to him. "I hope you're ready James, because it's going to be a long night," I mutter almost to myself.

Todd is on the radio and Fred increases his speed. I sit very still looking out the window. I can see from the corner of my eye that James needs to be alone with his thoughts. I can hear Ian talking. There is a problem; the front gate to the Fort is locked. Todd is now talking to me. It takes a second to register. He tells me to get the bolt cutters out when we arrived on scene, and Fred is yelling obscenities at the news.

By now I can see the main entrance to the Fort and Ian's command truck. Ian is standing in front of the gate. As we come almost to a screeching halt, I jump off the truck and open a side compartment. The bolt cutters are the last things I find in the mess of tools. I race to the gate and I find myself the only one there. James quickly appears, though, like a ghost materializing out of the dense fog. As I cut the lock on the gate I can hear Ian and Fred talking frantically. James pushes the gate open and we run back to the truck. As I get in I see Engine 2621 pull up behind us. Fred jumps back in the driver seat and off we go. We are all off as quickly as we got on. James is frozen in place, staring into the woods. The entire Fort is engulfed in flames. There are

several trees torching and it looks like the entire forest is on fire. "Grab the Two-and-a-half off the back of the truck," Fred yells. I can barely hear him over the roar of the fire.

I run to the back of the truck where I am joined by two other firefighters. One of them has a line and is starting to charge through the woods towards the Fort. I grab the next line and follow. Sweat is pouring off my face as I get closer and closer to the fire.

Suddenly, there I am, standing before the gates to hell. It's a huge fireball, the roar is deafening. The trees, going up in flames, sound like fireworks going off. "Boom," a wall of the fort comes down and in its place stands a deadly wall of flames. The heat is unbearable.

I drop my line and ran back towards the truck to get more hose. When I make it back to the truck there are lines laid out everywhere. Firefighters in air packs, carrying hoses, are running in every direction. I come upon some hose lying on the ground and before I know it Fred yells, "Take that hose and extend the line!"

I grab it and off I go dodging firefighters the whole way. When I reach the end of the hose there is a firefighter standing there. He helps me connect. When I look up I see a firefighter standing in the doorway to the Fort. I put my face shield down and charge forward. I hand him the hose as he says, "Tell Fred to charge the line. We need water."

I turn and run for the truck yelling, "Charge the line! Charge the line!" the whole way. Finally I reach Fred where I repeat, "Charge the line, Fred. They need water."

The engine roars as the water enters the line. I jump off the truck and go back towards the Fort. Jerry Aldermen, our retired fire chief, is standing at the door as a firefighter with hoses enters into the building. I find my way to the end of a charged hose line where Alison and James meet me. I hear Ian tell us to "Get in there and start fighting fire."

Without saying a word to one another we all pick up the line and charge for the doors of the Fort. I am on the nozzle followed by Alison and then James. At the gates Jerry is telling me to put water on the left side of the Fort and prevent any further damage. Finally our time has come. I look in the Fort to see fire everywhere and hose lines going into different doorways. As we go in we are greeted by immediate fire, smoke, and extreme heat.

I turn my hose on full power and began killing the fire. "Tssst," the fire hisses at us as we knock it down. Further and further we go in until there is fire all around us,



ready to swallow us at any moment. Fire creeps out from around corners to see if it is safe to come out and then sucks back in. I move into a room that is completely engulfed in flames. A quick burst of water from my hose takes some of its life away but in its place gives me a dose of heavy smoke. We are in the soul of the fire; it's thick and can surround and engulf us at any time. The smoke starts getting so thick that all I can see is a faint glow of the fire in the corner of the room.

"Hit it high, Alex," I hear Alison say to me.

I see the fire trying to sneak towards us across the ceiling. "Tsss, Tsssst," it hisses at us as we back it up further into the room.

Soon all is dark. Smoke is thick around us. It has finally consumed us. I find myself trying to get a breath of fresh air but there is no air to breath. With the fire knocked down, and in its place unbreathable air, we decide to back out.

We are now in the parade grounds of the Fort with more fire screaming at us, telling us to leave. In return we smother it in water. We do so until it is almost knocked down. We back out of the Fort to safety and clean, crisp air. The ground is muddy from water and by now there are loads of firefighters scattered about. We all drop hoses, exhausted and wet.

As I stand there, watching a small fire dance across the roof, I realize something. This Fort is a part of my childhood, and now it's gone. Water begins to pool in my eyelids. The Fort that I have so many happy memories of lies in ruin. A part of my childhood is gone forever, my home destroyed. I can feel the water running down my soot caked cheeks. I refuse to give up. I refuse to quit. I find a hose, and, exhausted and tired as I am, I turn it on and aim it at the fire laughing at me from on top of the roof.



Lady Camille

*Angela Baumgartner*

## Not Knowing What to Say

*KimChi Vo*

As I close my eyes,

I see the world flash before me.  
I see things I don't want to see,  
People I don't recognize,  
Wishing I were free.

Looking down on my world,  
In my heart is placed a stake,  
I have such a desire to shake me,  
Hoping I might break.

Why do I rely on others to make me happy?  
All I really need is me.  
Friends are forgettable memories,  
So pointless can't you see?

Wanting a one true love,  
I know I will never get.  
Waiting for that phone call,  
I know was never sent.

Tell me why, oh why  
This world is emptiness,  
Filled with complicated apathy,  
No one to hold me, no one to caress.

We are who we choose to be?  
By what we say and do?  
One day this life will end,  
And hopefully I can start anew.

## At the Blue Star

*Robert Michael Pyle*

"Darn tasty beer," reads the poster for Manny's Pale Ale, and you know, it is. My friend drives The truck that delivers the malt to Manny's Brewery in Georgetown, and that is good work In the world.

Christmas shopping on foot in Wallingford, My usual problem arose: three males left on the list, and no ideas. "They don't *always* have to get books, you know, " was my wife's advice. Oh, what to do?

But once again, Tweedy and Popp's Hardware came to the rescue. Snapping up three tubes of Gorilla Glue, three rolls of Gorilla Tape, I mumbled "That takes care of them, " and ticked the lads' names off the list. My labors thus completed,

I walked down to the Blue Star. "Manny's, please," I told the barmaid. "Out shopping?" she asked. "That's right," I said, "hard work, hard work." "Well, here's you Manny's," she said, setting the pint before me, making it all worthwhile. Darn tasty beer.



# Disappointments in the Potato Line

*Robert Michael Pyle*

I.

For more than ten years now,  
There has always been rotmos  
At Fayette's Christmas party. Nothing else,  
Not the potato sausage from Ballard,  
The sylte or skottbullar or rullepølse,  
All these meats slathered in lingonberries;  
Not the pickled herring, nor the krumkaka  
The almond ears or the pepparkokar;  
Not even the lemon curd sandbakels, nor yet  
The Captain's famous custard that he refuses  
To refrigerate all night long, then serves  
At breakfast, so good that we eat it anyway,  
Salmonella be damned.

None of the treats prepared  
By this plate-licking Swede  
In his annual orgy of holiday fare  
Provokes the rapture, the ooh's and ahh's, the drool  
Daubed just in time or caught with a krumkaka,  
As the rotmos. This unprepossessing mash,  
This off-white, oleo-yellow mush  
Of rutabagas and potatoes goes down  
So easy alongside the sweets and fats,  
Stances the sugar, soaks up the grease,  
Makes a landing pad in the pylorus  
For one more pickled herring.

This year, everything was in place, as usual,  
Until you got to the end of the line:  
No rotmos! An utter absence of rutabaga,  
An impoverishment of potatoes. Just then  
I felt something go out of Christmas  
As I had, say, in 1956, when my mother  
And Santa Claus both left. With luck,  
The rotmos might be back next year.  
Christmas as it once was,  
Never.

## II.

It's not that I have to have a donut,  
As some people insist. I don't think  
It is a matter of sentiment, either. There  
He was, the Spudnut Man: perched on a Cushman  
Tricycle with a cab and a box on the back  
Like the one the Popsicle Man drove. His bell  
Tinkling, tinkling in the dimity of asphalt blocks,  
Mouths watering Pavlov-style, until  
The Spudnuts arrived at our door. Who  
Among us could resist? Big, glazed, potato donuts!

Years later I worked at a Dunkin' Donuts.  
The difference was dramatic, like Red Delicious  
To Cox's Pippin. Flaccid, cloying blimps of fat,  
The glazed I sold couldn't touch those  
Of the plump and luscious past.  
Long lost, the Spudnut Man, long lost.

Nothing or Southing the Oregon coast,  
Reward for getting through Lincoln City's strip  
Or fortification for facing it, we always top  
At a certain hole in the wall where we know  
Beyond the shadow of a doubt  
That the very best donuts may be had  
From the old German couple who makes them.  
"Potato donuts," reads the faded sign. But this time  
Another sign says "Closed," and it looks serious:  
Maybe for the season; maybe forever.

Maybe the old German guy was the Spudnut Man,  
Gone to ground on the West Coast, his tricycle  
Cushman rotting out back in the salal.  
What can you count on, after all?

## III.

It should have been delicious.  
The words sounded so good  
Together, like strawberries and cream,  
Dark chocolate and coffee. How

Could it not be sublime?  
Peach potato pie:  
A dish of perfect cadence,  
Ingredients aligned in alliteration  
And grace. Doesn't it make  
You smack your lips, how  
Those succulent syllables roll out?  
Peach potato pie.

Writers ought to know a good dish  
When they hear it. So why didn't they like it?  
Polite, was the way they picked  
The peaches from the pie. "Nice crust,"  
Said one. "Interesting texture," another.  
But on the whole my pie fell flat. Maybe  
It was love that brought us there. Love  
Of one another, of good words, good food.  
They loved my salal pie, my apple.  
But love was not enough to save  
My peach potato pie.

Excepting their common stodgy pallor,  
Peaches do not marry with potatoes.  
As rutabagas do, and a fluffy crust  
Does not a Spudnut make. Next time  
I'll leave the peaches to the cobbler,  
The spuds to the rotmos.

Such a mush as I created, marriage  
Often makes, as minds that thought  
Themselves alike, collide instead of blen.  
So just as you'd suspect a poem  
That tastes all sweet, or a match  
Whose partners always smile, beware  
The dish whose very name is a lyric.

Peach potato pie:  
It should have been great.

## Death by Salt

*Julie Whitus*

Antenna's up,  
Henceforth toward mushroom,  
At the rate of one centimeter per minute,  
A slimy trail left behind.

Loud thumps approaching,  
Voices yell "ewe" and "gross."  
"Let's get the salt!"

Falling grains of salty acid,  
Burn.  
Eat away at my flesh.

Shriveling to deformity,  
Torturous cries fall silent,  
As I breathe my last breath.





Bench by the River

*Christopher Vaughn*

## Henry's Rhubarb

*Barbara Stoffer*

Henry's Rhubarb was the name  
No two batches were ever the same  
Nevertheless no wine could compare  
With the kick that Henry's had in there  
Rows of cloudy pink gallons  
So deadly, so smug  
Like they knew what you'd do once you hoisted a jug  
Sloshed in a glass or over your shoulder  
Make you act like an ass but feel wiser and bolder  
There was Raspberry and Loball if you were lookin' for desert  
But Rhubarb's the one left you face down in the dirt  
Its looks were deceiving  
Opaque, pink, and placid  
There were those even claimed he laced it with acid  
If the things people did were any indication  
It might not have been that much of an exaggeration  
I've seen old friends I thought I knew  
Do things I never thought I'd see them do  
And as for myself, well, I'll never tell  
It's no big secret, it's just  
I don't remember it too well

The days of our youth were steeped in your wine  
Our whole lives before us  
Our hearts on the line  
You graced weddings and birthdays  
Champagne wouldn't do  
You toasted us  
We paid homage to you  
It just wasn't a party without "you know who"

Way before "radical dude"  
And "duh, what was I thinkin'?"  
Before we ever heard of "responsible drinkin'"  
Back 'round 1967, "the summer of love"  
Some sort of magic from above

We felt good vibrations and all had the notion  
That the spirit was in us and the world was in motion  
'Course it helped to have a swig of that rhubarb love potion  
Little psychedelic pills and joints passed around  
With some good ol' "you guessed it", to wash it all down  
Straight people stared  
We tried to look weird  
They should have seen us once the Henry's appeared  
The Crystal was rockin', the music kept comin'  
Conga drums talkin', guitars strummin'  
Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane, Iron Butterfly  
Those days nobody passed Portland by  
Buffalo Springfield, Moby Grape  
What I wouldn't give to have it all on tape  
Then came The Doors and the whole scene exploded  
It was all so "far-out"  
Or were we just loaded?

Friends might come over and just for fun  
You decide it's time for a Henry's run  
You pool-up your money and pile in the van  
And beat it on down to Rhubarb Land  
Oregon City isn't so far to go  
It's the gettin' back home that can go kinda' slow  
Token' and jokin' in sweet anticipation  
Ahhh, the first killer jolt of that pink fermentation  
Ready to sacrifice pride and all reason  
Oh no! Not "The Sign"!  
"Sold Out Till Next Season"  
Don't tell me we gotta wait until next year's vintage  
To consummate our dreams of debauchery and sinnage  
Dazed and defeated you stumble toward the door  
Feels like we've been cheated  
Better roll-up one more  
The weeks drag on  
You're up-tight and stressin'  
The news and the weather gettin' downright depressin'  
When one glorious day the word finally comes down  
Prepare to roxk steady  
"The Henry's is Ready!"

Hearts light up all over town  
Never again my long lost friends  
Though maybe it's just as well  
Once was prob'ly enough for all that stuff  
We'll always have the stories to tell  
So with cups overflowing we toast you today  
"To all of the good things that fade away  
To all our old friends- the dear and the true  
To the ones still here kickin'  
To the ones we once knew  
To those murky pink gallons of that dangerous brew"  
Thanks for the memories, Henry  
"Here's to you!"



# When the Wind Came

*Sue Falkner Wood*

They're calling it the storm of the century. The forecast predicted its strength, although, at first, we didn't believe it. We'd heard it all before. "High wind warning, heavy rain" is not all that unusual to us. Perhaps this was a cry of "wolf"?

How were we to know? Winters here are usually colorful and adventurous. This time it went too far and almost blew us away.

Those who believed began to hammer plywood over antique glass windows. Mothers raced to the store and stocked up on milk, eggs and bread. Their bags overflowed with bottled water, batteries and panic. Much like Noah, we began to watch the sky and a strange foreboding filled the air. The soft rain began to fall, then harder as it came with drops the size of marbles. The winds began to stir with gusts of 60 mph as the dog hid under the bed. The cat disappeared entirely.

Christmas ornaments began to swing as well as the tassel on the ceiling fan. The rain became a torrent striking each side of the house unable to decide on a direction. It swirled around as if looking for a way in. Large, broken branches began to blow striking the house with mud balls as if they were thrown by a mighty hand. Our old house began to tremble swaying with each gust which had doubled in strength.

The electricity flickered, then died, along with the cable as darkness descended. The only sound, the wind roaring through the trees encircled the house pounding for access. The combination of wind and rain hammered at the old glass and tugged at the roof. Trashcans flew up the street chased by recycling bins. We waited as it churned, pummeled and drove itself through town. We looked out trembling leaded glass waiting for Dorothy and Toto to fly by. The sounds of falling trees crackled through the air and shook the earth as they fell.

The streets were empty except for the churning air filled with debris, bits of foliage and enormous chunks of wood.

Pots rolled off of porches, chased by screen doors as the unrelenting wind grew stronger. No one slept well as we waited for it to stop. We layered our clothes, trying to stay warm as the roar continued and grew stronger.

Some were awakened by water pouring in from roofs no longer there. Others were startled by the sound of magnificent, one hundred-year-old tree heaving to the

ground, leaving cavernous muddy holes where their roots had been. Others were chopped off by the wind as if a giant chain saw was thrust through the air, chopping the heads off of anything in its path. Our only contact was the local radio station with its welcoming voice of reassurance. We found out what was happening to our neighbors and felt assured we were not alone.

After 36 hours and winds reaching 129 mph, we crawled out from under the wreckage, grateful to be alive. We clung to each other as we learned all the roads were impassable. Businesses with shattered windows remained remarkably unmolested along a street strewn with sparkling glass. Neighbor reached out to neighbor, strangers talked to strangers, all of us felt relief to have survived. We had new priorities as we struggled to stay warm and find some way to cook our spoiling food. We shared, we snuggled, we laughed and cried. Life had changed for all of us as the sound of chainsaws filled the air, tarps appeared on roofs and life resumed.



Storm of December 2007

*Don Nisbett*

## The Shrinking Woman

*Sue Falkner Wood*

For twenty five years she pined, longing for his physical presence, his caring, his love as if asking to join him was all she had to do, to make it so. Two weeks after he died, she called one midnight.

"He's gone," she cried, "I can't find him anywhere."

We drove over, bundled her up in a large, warm robe as she continued to cry, took her to our home and made her as comfortable as possible on our roomy sofa. She appeared, somehow, to be smaller in stature. She had held together for his funeral because everything had to be perfect. The flowers, the songs, the tributes to him. In some part of her mind she knew it was her final act of love. The realization lay in wait for her, until that night, when she found his wallet in the bureau drawer. It was the paper trail he left behind.

She became restless, languid, constantly longing for what was gone. She moved less, cared less and gradually began to give away her possessions. She had decided to enter an assisted living center; all the time hoping, one of us would stop her and say, "Mom, come live with me." No one could, each of us had difficult circumstances in our own lives. She became angry, unable to understand our lives she chose to relive a painful childhood, old grudges sprang to life. Problems from decades earlier took on life as though they had happened only yesterday. Each day she became shriveled by her bitterness, old anger rekindled, sparked into a burning rage.

Her constant plea was, "Why won't God take me?" We each struggled to give her something, anything, such as visits with the grandkids, including her in our lives whenever possible but nothing we offered fit her need. We sought ways to make her life more comfortable, although she made no effort to cooperate. Struggles within her mind made her difficult to be with, as people began to avoid her, even her family. Her arthritis, inactivity and natural aging all became worse.

Everyday she disappeared a little more, in thought, in body, until she gradually oh, so slowly, embraced death. She finally got what she wanted, to be with him forever.

## Jesus in the Dorms

*Dennis Warren*

I found Jesus in the dorms at the University of Oregon, spring term 1979. I had just glanced at my alarm clock. It was late, almost 3:30 in the morning, when I got the call. It wasn't Jesus on the phone. It was Lilly, my co-resident assistant. We were kinda like graduate student cops hired to live in the dorms to make sure no one broke the rules.

"Cowboy!" she screamed. "Get your ass down here. We have an intruder in the lounge."

It was after midnight. I was ghostbuster; I was the guy you called.

Four minutes later I walked into the lounge.

"Jesus Chris," I said, and he sat there, relaxing on a couch. You all know the guy. His picture is hanging on your Sunday school wall: long hair, caring eyes, slightly soiled white robe and dusty sandals. Jesus looked just like I thought he should, even better.

"I've been looking forward to talking to you, Jesus," I said. "Not this soon though." Lilly eyed me suspiciously. I wasn't the church-going type.

Jesus and I had a pleasant chat. His answers were biblical, his voice a soft melody. You couldn't help but like the guy.

Lilly thought I was crazy. "Why don't you cast him out?" she asked. I told Lilly my mom had busted her butt getting me confirmed. I wasn't about to be kickin' Jesus' ass out of the dorms while Momma was alive.

I called my boss, Frank. He was in his last year of law school. I knew Frank. Frank would kick out Jesus and Gandhi and Buddha to boot. Frank showed up five minutes later.

"Jesus Chris," he said. It's amazing how many people respond appropriately when they first confront the Messiah.

"Are you kidding me, Cowboy?" Frank asked. "Is this a set up? Is this because I'm Jewish?"

"You think I'm that good, Frank?"

"No."



Frank turned to Jesus. "Sir, what are you doing here?"

Jesus smiled. "I'm Jesus of Nazareth. I saw your lights and stopped for a rest."

"Well, whoever you are," Frank said, "Strangers can't sleep in our lounge. It's against the rules."

"Thank you," Jesus said as he quietly rose. He strolled out into the darkness and disappeared.

"Man, Cowboy," Frank said, "that was one hell of an act."

"It wasn't an act," I replied.

Frank looked at me funny. "You think this guy was for real, Cowboy?"

"It doesn't matter, Frank. Jesus can't sleep in our dormitory. Jesus is against the rules."

## **Brother's Keeper**

*Ophelia Kelley*

The congregation barely looked up when the woman led a man into the room by the chain encircling his neck. His hands were restrained as well, and leg irons limited his walk to a sort of straight-legged skip.

The man in irons looked furtively around the large room, searching for a sympathizer. He soon realized that no one would help him escape this room, or the chains, or the woman who held him captive. If he were to escape, it would have to be by his own device. His skin bore scars and signs of his years as a prisoner long before the woman chained him. Only in his late forties, the man's face had already folded in on itself, skin hanging loose and dehydrated, eyes yellowed and sunken, his teeth chinked and sullied from neglect. His wisp-thin hair hung in a ratty ponytail. Had it not been for a belt and the bones in his shoulders, his clothes might have slipped from his body and landed in a quiet pool at his feet.

The woman settled her captive into a chair and went to the leader of the group to speak in low voices. They each took a turn glancing over their shoulders. The group leader even smiled and gave the fettered man a look of encouragement, but then turned his back, completely at ease that a man sat in chains in a public building, in a free country, among good citizens.

This group was a more radical faction of another, more famous organization. Unlike the original group, this one believed in coercion, believed it was permissible to force people to do things for their own good until they came around to believing the same things they did. In truth, the group was afraid of the people brought to the meetings in chains. They believed that until they could convince the prisoners to see the group's way, they were dangerous, both to themselves and to the rest of society; this impending danger, believed the group, gave them the right to do whatever it took to change people like the man who now sat in restraints.

The chained man did not see himself as a danger to himself or to society. He believed he led a quiet life and bothered no one. What he did behind the walls of his home was his business. He admitted that, upon occasion, his habits might have spilled through his doors and touched the lives of others, but it wasn't that bad. His actions certainly didn't deserve chains and meetings with people he believed to be zealots in a cult.

The woman keeping him captive had told him he was already a prisoner, had been

for years, but didn't recognize it. He'd scoffed and answered that although his life might not meet with her standards and, in case she hadn't heard about it, he had the right to live his life any way he wanted — and he certainly hadn't been anyone's prisoner until now. The woman had smiled without derision and reached up a gentle hand to separate the thin

hair from the perspiration beaded on his brow. She admitted to him that she had once believed the same way he did, but stood staunch that he had no right to hurt others, or attempt to commit murder, or even to take his own life.

He'd screamed at her that he had never done those things. Where had she gotten these ideas? Attempted murder? Suicide? None of this made sense. He didn't even own a gun.

The group leader began the meeting by asking someone to read the bylaws and credos. People around the room nodded in agreement at certain passages that meant the most to them or that they believed helped change their lives. The chained man groaned deep in his throat at the ridiculousness of these people's beliefs. Hearing him, the woman gave him a side-glance that warned him not to make trouble.

"We're all very grateful to be here tonight," said the group leader. "And we're always happy to see new faces," he said, acknowledging the prisoner with a tilt of his head.

"With that in mind, would you like to start off our meeting?" He nodded at the woman sitting next to the man in chains.

The woman cleared her throat and sat straighter in her chair. She looked uncomfortable with the attention centered on her. This was her first time bringing someone in chains to a meeting. She looked at the man sitting next to her — wanting so much to see him live, to be happy, the younger brother she'd loved all these years — and delivered words she'd said a thousand times, words she believed saved her life.

"My name is J---, and I'm an alcoholic."

## Going North

*Pat Densmore*

David decided there was nothing for it but we should go fishing in Alaska. He grew up there and was homesick. "Come with me." He said. "You'll love it!" He said. "We'll just go up for the summer, and if you don't like it we'll come back." He actually said that! I should have known once he got back to Alaska it would take an act of God to pry him out! Of course, he meant what he said at the time. Well, maybe not, but he figured his powers of persuasion and the idea that I just had to love Alaska as much as he did would make all the difference in the world.

I met David Densmore in 1964 when he and his family moved to Oregon and he started enrolled at Knappa High School. He was bound and determined to return to Alaska and the fishing life. As it turned out, over the years he not only fished Alaska, but the whole west coast so I would run into him off and on for the next 16 years. In 1980 our trails finally converged and we fished together out of Astoria

After a winter of fishing crab and a crash course in the art of trying to catch a tiny crab buoy with an 80' schooner, Dave decided I was ready for a more adventurous life.

I'd fished for almost a year with David and had fished on other boats, but only for a few months. I still considered myself a greenhorn, not a green greenhorn, but maybe a medium-green greenhorn. My family consisted of a bunch of fishermen and that was good enough for David. He said it was in the blood! In retrospect, considering some of the crewmen I met later, I was actually a pretty good crewman by the time we left for Alaska.

David had spent a lot of quality time fine-tuning my training by giving me an exciting winter dragging bottom fish on the Jenny F. Decker and fishing crab on the Sunapee. The Jenny F. Decker was a famous wood halibut schooner that had fished many years off the coast. She had started her career under sail and still had her masts. She drew 13' and looked a lot like a shark sliding through the water. The Sunapee was a 79' wood east-coast cod-fishing schooner, built in 1918. She was a mere youngster compared to the 99-year-old Jenny F. Decker. David had come upon the Sunapee laying derelict in Seattle, fell in love with her schooner lines and just had to have her. She looked like a pirate boat when he was finished refitting her. A lot of people think David looks like a pirate himself so they were a pretty good match. She was a great sea boat, needed a little more work on the inside of the house but David said that was small potatoes. In my opinion, I thought she needed a lot more work inside! I was to learn that he didn't worry much over small potatoes. Well, slick talking pirate that



he is, I was finally convinced that I just had to go to Alaska. And that was how I was shanghaied in Astoria.

We loaded up the boat with 300 Dungeness crab pots that David had traded his house for. We loaded our stores aboard and our three dogs; we couldn't leave them behind. We had David's 9-year-old son, Skeeter, aboard for the summer. We also had two deckhands, Mike Hubbard, and an older more seasoned hand, Ron La Chapell. And my mother! She wasn't actually going to Alaska with us. David had invited her to ride down-river and we would drop her off in Illwaco where my sister, Kathy, would pick her up. She needed no second invitation; she was down the ladder and on the boat before I knew it. David helped her aboard and across the tops of the huge stack of chained down Dungeness crab pots. I watched through my fingers in horror as she tottered across the tops of the pots. I think my mother had a much bigger sense of adventure than I ever did! She really liked David; she thought he was such a tough guy! I think she would have gone if I'd stayed home! Once we dropped Mama off, with many calls of farewell and waving, we were off to Alaska! It was my big summer adventure, or so I thought.

We headed out the river and swung north. David was already feeling happier! I was already feeling homesick! We rolled up the Washington coast past Vancouver Island then headed toward the Inside Passage and stopped for fuel in the Canadian port of Prince Rupert. We arrived about dawn and tied up to the local fuel float. David warned that we couldn't go up town until we were cleared by Customs. He radioed the agency and they would send someone down to inspect the boat. Then, he said, "The fuel float isn't really land so you and Skeeter can go have a shower." It was just a few feet from the boat after all. Wrong! The agent was aboard when we got out of the shower and she informed us the boat was seized! The woman was new and, of course, adhering to the letter of the law. So Skeeter and I were in trouble. The fuel float was tied to land so it was part of Canada. She said she couldn't let that pass and fined us \$100 for being ashore. Then she asked to see the health certificates of the three dogs. No, we didn't have any. So now she said the dogs were 'seized' too. We couldn't leave until we got them health certificates. We hadn't planned on taking them ashore to begin with, but since we didn't have their papers we had to take them ashore to get the certificates and shots! That was another \$150 from our meager funds. On a good note, we did get a walking tour of Prince Rupert. We finally managed to get everything straightened out; we fueled up, and headed out again before they thought of something else to fine us for. David teased us for months about our \$50 showers in Canada. And it was all his fault!

We continued on our way up the inside passage through places so narrow, the currents so fast, the long passageways are called races. It was close passing on-coming

traffic, especially in the dark. There were large rafts of loose logs to navigate around because of recent high tides. We had to be careful not to hit any as some tangles stretched almost bank to bank. Some had huge root wads too. Occasionally we passed a cruise ship loaded with happy tourists. David tried to convince me we were having a much better time on our boat. At least our captain, him, let me steer the boat once in awhile, and he bet they wouldn't do that! We each had a 2-hour wheel watch though David usually kept the wheel during most of the day. It was fun seeing all the new country, even when I was on wheel watch, a challenge at night following the charts and watching for logs, boats and buoys.

We didn't stop again until we pulled into Ketchikan. We needed fuel and groceries for the last leg of our trip across the Gulf. We took some time to see old Ketchikan and a few of the sights. There were two huge cruise ships tied up there that towered over the town. It was the first time I had seen one up close and standing still. The ones we had passed were usually running at night lit up like a city on the move.

Once out of Ketchikan we traveled in a northwesterly arc to Icy Strait and then south into Lisinski Inlet and down to Pelican. Pelican is a small fishing village where we spent our last night on the eastern side of the Gulf of Alaska. I really liked Pelican, with its wooden boardwalks and neat old buildings. The harbor master didn't like our dogs. He bade us keep them on a leash and clean up after them! We hadn't even finished tying up the boat! They had enough dogs, he'd said, like we were going to leave them there.

We spent the night then headed out again up the narrow Lisinski Inlet and into an even narrower strait of the same name. It was raining and a little windy and I looked back as we headed off-shore across the Gulf of Alaska, wondering if I would ever come back.

It took us four days to cross the Gulf, the weather settled down and it came glassy calm and sunny. We passed the Fairweather grounds with the snowy mainland mountains to the north of us. We saw a sunfish and I got my first look at a sea otter. It was floating on its back with its big back feet sticking up in the air and cradled a clam with its front feet. It floated lazily in the water and watched us go by.

It was evening of the 9th day when we sighted Kodiak. There was a wonderful sunset as we neared the island. We pulled into Kodiak town about sun down; it was midnight, but still daylight, the 15th of June. It was the beginning of a 14-year adventure.



Daybreak, East Mooring Basin      *Rosetta Hurley*

## Lucidity, Life, Repeat

*Amy Willis*

Movement lingers quietly, after I sleep, forever to repeat.  
Thoughts lie heavy like my dreams, lucidity to repeat.

Tonight I ride my flying carpet through bedroom windows  
eleven stories high, it seems, soaring to repeat.

Later, I will fight bear with my bare hands and win  
in the wild, defending my family genes, better to repeat.

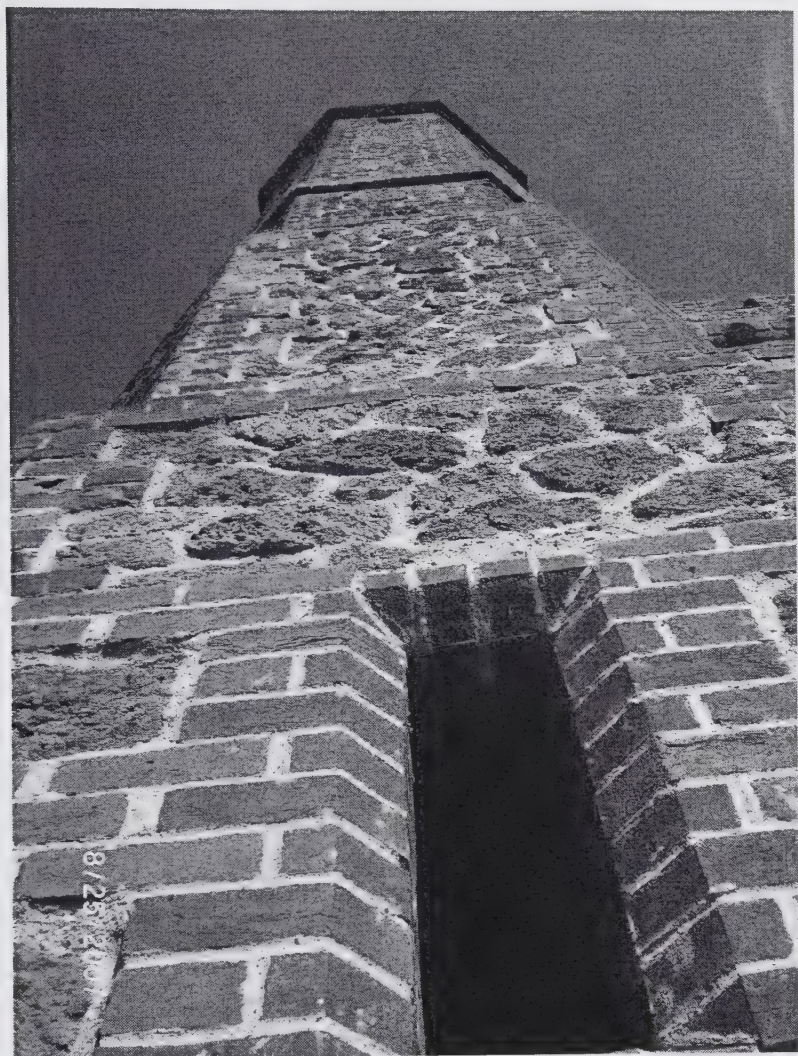
I'll probably fall in love with Mystery Man again,  
on a water tower where everything streams, hoping to repeat.

When tomorrow comes, I'll already be spent  
feeling my body's aches and screams, dreading to repeat.

Wondering when the rainy season will come, if ever  
it's November and the sun beams, warming to repeat.

Eager to end my day, another way, tonight  
resting my weary head, closing daily themes, never to repeat.





Tower

*Diane D. Lane*

## **Like Ants Before God**

*Casey Ruic*

There is one point in the universe  
Where everything seems drawn  
Gravity feels heavier  
And arrows always connect  
Like there's a body buried  
Where you stand  
A fine beam of sunshine  
Shot through a magnifying glass  
Did you ever notice  
A burning spot on your spine?  
Because I think I smell smoke

## Metropolitan Funeral Procession

*Casey Ruic*

The murder was celebrated  
Publicly, sullenly  
As a quiet reminder  
Of all that hope could ever be  
365 days of memorials  
To attend to

Eyes age quicker than smiles  
Hearts age quicker than bodies  
Faith may be what murders reason  
Not unlike how truth murders hope

The key is not to stop moving  
Wounds bleed faster that way



*Kung Fu Eric*

You don't have to paint  
to be an artist, you just  
need to *live* your life.



# Of Wood

*James Dott*

For beam or bowl, a fiddle, fire, each is filled with worth,  
Straight grained fir, knotty pine, and spladded alderwood.  
Yet no wood lasts, the lasting turn and turn of earth,

A tree is felled, and as a fallen log, finds rebirth,  
Is cut and planed for boards, or split for firewood,  
For beam or bowl, a fiddle, fire, each is filled with worth,

The uses of wood, both hard and soft, have no dearth,  
Fine, tight grains, whorled burls, each grew only as it could  
Yet no wood lasts, the lasting turn and turn of earth,

Ring by ring, rain, air, in-streaming sun build trees' girth  
Cambium wraps each new year around old heartwood,  
For beam or bowl, a fiddle, fire, each is filled with worth,

The old tree drops, comes undone, is now a place of birth,  
A home for beetles, fungi, voles, where the giant stood,  
And no wood lasts, the lasting turn and turn of earth,

From wood a box where sound sings our sorrow and our mirth,  
A tree's stilled life held for a time, gives back its good,  
For beam or bowl, a fiddle, fire, each is filled with worth,  
Yet no wood lasts, the lasting turn and turn of earth.

## Small Things

*James Dott*

Each small thing a knot in the net sunlight passes through,  
Each moment a jewel, a lens, our sight passes through.

In scale: each small thing large, each large thing small,  
Each moment, whole in its own right, passes through.

The sky is lit with small-seeming suns, stars, galaxies,  
In time, each one's fire, dim or bright, passes through.

Kingfisher, dragonfly, stream that rings its tumbled stones,  
The I within, the self, each name ignites, passes through.

Over the river: a wing of geese beats west from dawn  
their high honking, faint as their flight passes through.

At midday, on a gust of wind, a flock of chickadees,  
with its incessant song to recite, passes through.

Nearing dark, a merganser dives, surfaces, swims on,  
its wake an ever-widening vee twilight passes through.

Into each life a little rain must fall, sometimes a deluge,  
sometimes a river, darker than midnight, passes through.

A dead sunflower star rests in the rising tide, legs swaying  
as each incoming wave, large, slight, passes through.

A torn strand of a late spider's web waves in the wind,  
the maker's egg sac waits as winter's blight passes through.

My daughter plays with small things, builds worlds with  
words, dolls, scraps of stories that delight passes through.

I praise small things: fern spores, redwood root hairs,  
sea star tube feet, fly wings, all forms light passes through.

Find peace in small things, held for a moment, like water,  
let go, to you, each word I write, passes through.



Tracks of Life

*David Lee Myers*

## Vine Maple

*James Dott*

Green beneath green.  
All spring and summer they hide in the understory,  
then in late August each leaf begins to burn.  
After the alder and big leaf maples  
are stripped by wind and rain,  
they come to light,  
glowing amidst the rain-black trunks,  
holding their leaves a week, or two longer.  
But even they will be bared  
to their skeletal selves  
before the darkest day  
drains quickly into the longest night.  
Now, the sun sweetened sap  
has sunk into the soil-bound roots,  
buds are clenched tight,  
gripping their dream of dappled light  
when each new leaf opens its palm  
to greet the return.  
Green beneath green.





*Izi at one hour - photo by Jody De Penning*

It's 5 p.m. on December 22nd, 2007. Nearing our destination, I turn north on Highway 101 at Seaside, Oregon. It's been raining, snowing at higher elevations, since we left Portland. Raising my gaze above the steering wheel for a brief moment, I glimpse the full moon rising at the top of the windshield. "Look at the full moon, Bob. I bet the baby is coming right now!" I ponder how unusual it is for me to be driving in such inclement weather while my husband sleeps. It's been a long day. Twenty-four hours ago at home in Richland we were packing for a sojourn of unknown duration in Astoria. With the baby's birth and the holidays imminent, we attended our friends' Yakama Sun Turns Round Feast in White Swan and continued our journey west from there.

On the longest night of the year, we entered the longhouse about 9 o'clock. As I followed Bob around the dance floor, our friend Russell Jim, longhouse spiritual leader and bell ringer, greeted us warmly. "How is Nancy? Has the baby come yet?"

"Not yet," Bob responded, "but she is in labor."

Women and children sit on the south side of the longhouse, men on the north, the drummers on the west side. Entering from the east, Bob and I found seats on opposite sides of the room. Had daughter Nancy not been heavy with child, she would certainly have been sitting next to me on the women's side as so often over the past fifteen

years. Lucky we are to be welcomed like extended family in the longhouse, to experience the drumming and dancing, naming the sacred foods and feasting in the traditional fashion of Sehapitian people for thousands of years. When we said our goodbyes around 2 a.m., Russell sent warm well wishes to Nancy and the baby being born on Indian New Years. A half hour later we checked into a Toppenish motel to sleep for six hours before continuing our journey west.

While driving across Young's Bay Bridge into Astoria I notice the full moon peeking through the dense cloud cover a second time. In the distance, multiple strands of colorful lights hanging from the top of the decorated Astoria Column create the illusion of a giant Christmas tree on the hillside. My excitement growing, I marvel at such festive stage setting for our new grandbaby's imminent arrival. Always significant, mid winter's night takes on special meaning for Nancy this year. Her women friends and relatives have received Solstice greetings with candles to light while she's in labor. I imagine candles flickering around the country on this dark and stormy night and smile.

Driving directly to Columbia Memorial Hospital just up from the Columbia River, I park outside the Emergency entrance. On Saturday evening of a long holiday weekend, we enter and walk down a city block of empty corridors. The first person we see points us to the Maternity Ward advising, "Ring the bell." Standing outside the Maternity doors we press the bell intermittently for several long moments. No response. The hall beyond the window is as strangely vacant as the halls behind us. Somewhere in there our daughter may be giving birth to our 5th grandchild. We have no choice but to stand at the door in quiet anticipation and wait.

oOo

It is certainly not the first time we have waited for Nancy in the past 38 years. I'm reminded of an earlier visit to Astoria on the occasion of the Lewis and Clark bicentennial commemoration in 2005. All through that stormy weekend we defied the weather, getting soaked at several of the scheduled events. Nancy's gal friend, Tami, was visiting too. One afternoon we drove in two cars across the Columbia to partake of a salmon feast offered by the Chinook Indians. Afterwards, standing in front of the Chinook School Nancy mumbled something about 'looking at tents' before her friend departed for home.

"Take a left," Tami told me. "The tents are on the right, about a half-a-mile away. They're small, hard to see." We were looking east as she pointed in the direction we would travel.

"Meet me there, and I'll ride back to Astoria with you," Nancy requested. She got in with Tami just as it started to rain. Walking back to our car I gave Bob the directions. Making a U-turn, we drove slowly, looking or actually driving down each of the

streets onto which we might turn left. It was difficult to see in the pouring down rain, but there were no tents. On the third pass Bob drove almost back to the Astoria Bridge before, assuming we had gone too far, turning right off the highway into a small park.

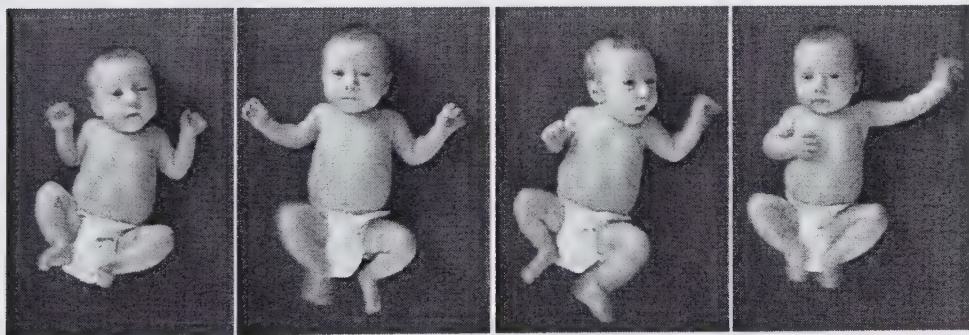
In the park I noticed several police cars, a few people standing by a large Indian teepee and what might best be described as white sheets strung on a long clothesline. Neither of us commented on the scene, impressionistic at best as seen through steamy windows in the steady downpour. His patience now challenged, Bob drove straight through the park, back onto the highway and returned to the salmon feast location. Assuming Nancy might come looking for us where we were last together, we waited, periodically turning on the windshield wipers to watch steady lines of headlights passing in both directions. That day, there may have been more travelers on WA Highway 101 than ever before in history, driving to or from Cape Disappointment in the footsteps of Lewis and Clark.

Hours later we returned to Astoria alone. Crossing on the green bridge I watched a small boat tossing and turning in huge waves. A mile or so up river on the Washington side, stormy weather had kept the famed explorers 'stranded and soaked to the bone for 6 days on a dismal nitch.' "They say everything changes, Bob, but this Pacific Coast weather may not have changed much in the last 200 years."

Finding Nancy at home marking papers, we attempted to unravel what went wrong?

"How did you miss me at the Encampment?" she asked, a hint of disdain in her voice. "You were right in front of us when I got out of the car to use the restroom. I came back out and you were gone."

All we could do that day was shake our heads and ask, "What Encampment? Where?"



Izi at nine weeks - photos by Nancy Cook



Fast forward two years and we are stationed behind locked double doors wondering what station of labor Nancy might be experiencing. Suddenly Nancy's partner George is standing next to us outside the maternity ward. Dripping wet, he seems surprised to see us. Without any greeting, but perhaps feeling the need to make some explanation for his presence outside the birthing room, the expectant father reports, "I've been putting the baby's seat in Nancy's car." We three wait together quietly until the door opens. Following George into the maternity ward, I watch him disappear into Room 203, without looking back. Bob is close on his heels.

"Nancy is not expecting us until after the birth," I remind my husband. "We will wait outside until we're invited!"

Long minutes later a nurse hastens out of 203. She looks at us inquisitively.

"Has the baby come yet?" I ask quickly, before she can vanish from view.

"Oh, yes. She's a beautiful little girl!"

"And how is her mother?"

"Born to give birth!" she replies enthusiastically, then away with full arms of mussed bed sheets.

Continuing to wander up and down the vacant hall, my thoughts drift back to the centennial weekend. With time on our hands a different day, Bob and I drove back across the long green Astoria Bridge to revisit the "sheets on a line," attempting to understand our communication failure. By now we knew we were looking for the Voyage of Discovery Reenactment of the Lewis and Clark Encampment at Station Camp: a collection of windblown white canvas tarps serving as less than efficient small tents for the latter-day explorers. Looking more carefully at the scene, I was reminded of a physician friend's photographs of earthquake devastation in Northern Pakistan.

For weeks I replayed that afternoon's events over and over again in my mind's eye. More than anything else during the Destination Pacific weekend, getting separated from Nancy in Chinook put me most in awe of the incredible 8000-mile Voyage of Discovery. The small Chinook County Park we passed through without stopping is located at the site of Station Camp where the Lewis and Clark Expedition spent ten days exploring the mouth of the Columbia River. Described in the journals as the highest spot above a 'butifull Sand beech,' it was their next stop after leaving the 'dismal nitch.' Tammy's left turn was our U-turn in front of the Chinook School and that made all the



difference! The Corps of Discovery traveled all the way from St. Louis, Missouri to the Pacific and back again on uncharted territory. With maps in hand, we got separated from Nancy in a half-mile expanse. Go Figure!

oOo

Lost in thought outside Room 203, someone interrupts my reverie. "Who are you looking for?"

"My daughter is Nancy."

"Oh, we're still cleaning things up in there. I'll tell her you're here."

Two centuries earlier the explorers were moving into nearby Fort Clatsop at this cold, wet, dimly dark time of year. Finding myself on strange uncharted territory, I feel far from confident in my ability to converse with the natives. Departing from home, I left the holy family figures poised outside the crèche on our hearth. Thinking about the age-old story of 'No Room in the Inn,' I begin to wonder where we will sleep on this night?



Izi at three days- photo by Sunny Cook

The corridor becomes a bit livelier and soon we find ourselves conversing with the hospital nurse midwife. She sheepishly admits, "My beeper apparently failed, and I missed your daughter's delivery." While we're talking, Nancy's doula and her friend, Kim, step out into the hall. Still breathless and in awe of the quick and beautiful natural delivery she tells me, "Nancy caught the baby's head." I also learn from Kim, "George missed the birth by a matter of minutes. He was home drumming and apparently didn't hear the phone ring." (Later I'll wonder, was he standing outside the Maternity Ward doors with us while the baby was being born?)

When the curtain finally rises, we tiptoe into a darkened room to see a tiny naked itty-bitsy lying on her mother's breast. Beaming as if under the spotlight, Nancy holds up her absolutely precious and beautiful baby girl. "Nizina Elizabeth, meet your Gram and Papa." We stare at a little red head that looks for all-the world like her own mama the day she was born. Hearing about the full moon, Nancy exclaims, "That's just when Izi was being born!" Leave it to Nancy to arrange such auspicious cosmic timing for the delivery of our newest little star: Born on the Winter Solstice, Under a Full Moon. Bravo! Bravo! Well, if the truth is known, the moon would not be officially full until December 23rd, and the actual moment of the Solstice was late on the 21st in our Pacific Standard Time zone. While we were feasting in White Swan, Nancy was laboring all through the longest night of the year, alone.

Solstice, translates from Latin, as 'Sol' for Sun and 'stice' for stopping or waiting. At midwinter the sun appears to stand in place for close to a week before the days lengthen perceptibly. We waited outside the maternity doors while she was being born. Izi waited in the hospital for several more days. Experiencing rapid and belabored breathing for her first twenty-four hours, the problem appeared to correct itself as the full moon rose again the following night. While we exchanged Christmas gifts in her hospital room on Day Three, our jaundiced new baby lay 'not in a manger under a star,' but in an incubator under bilirubin lights.

oOo

Miraculously reaching their destination where the Columbia River meets the Pacific Ocean, Lewis and Clark spent the 1805-06-winter at Fort Clatsop, sharing a drafty long house with Sacagawea and her baby Jean Baptiste. They saw the sun shine twelve days in three months. Two centuries later, we spend the first two weeks of baby Izi's life on common ground, perhaps experiencing similar musical weather fronts moving up the Pacific Coast. The heavens pour down rain, snow or graupel every single day. Occasionally the sun shines and we move the baby closer to the window. Once a beautiful rainbow hovers over the house while Izi sleeps. Looking out the living room window, most nights we can see the Astoria Column shining like a Christmas tree on the hill. The full moon wanes. Days and nights blend into a mosaic of memories, colorful and

sometimes gray tiles held together by raindrops, one constant in the ever-changing days. My teardrops mingle with the raindrops when it's time for us to say goodbye.

Solstice to New Years is the time each year when the battle between darkness and light resolves itself, and the days lengthen again. It's a special time of new beginnings. At this darkest time of the year a new baby brings a shining ray of hope into our lives.

Each night a baby is born is a holy night!  
Welcome Nizina Elizabeth.  
Born With 'Ocian in View  
O the Joy.



iMac Izi, age three months - *photo by Yvonne Lyman*

## All Quiet on the Western River

*Claudia Harper*

On the last day of August  
small gusts of wind  
push remnants  
of morning mist,  
leaving streaked light  
like blue-green pennants  
along horizon's rift,  
and a quiet river mirrors  
the azure gray flight  
of a pair of swifts.

In summer's fickle breeze  
from Warrenton distance  
small whitecaps ridge  
miniature sailing boats  
passing under the bridge  
seen like a child's erector set  
stretched to float  
between play-house hills  
and stiff-brushed trees  
edging a silhouette shadow.

The Columbia complains  
along greened rip-rap  
slapping small waved peaks  
from wakes of freighter-power,  
as speedboats race flat-splat  
on currents of blue-satin ribbon,  
and a deep chug-chug of trawler  
counterpoints seagull shrieks  
repeating the beat of red-white planes  
all percussion over still water.

Black cormorants lift  
shining wings, statue-still  
along parallel pilings



and swallows flick and twit  
on flirting sunshine.  
I turn and raise my eyes,  
where tall spruce rise  
above calm and whirr.  
and together we watch the sky  
for wind and rain's return,  
maybe tonight.



Orange Bumper

*Andrew Cier*

## Haiku Day

*Claudia Harper*

pink copper rising  
shimmers silverleaf treetops  
dawnsky awakes me

hot marigold sun  
noonstruck in dulling torpor  
only air dances

golden ball bounces  
ripples scattered scarletrose  
my beachwatch sunset

northern moon smiles wide  
soften the shadowed evening  
thoughts of you float south

# How to Tell a Good One

*Jon Broderick*

*For Henry*

The new kid wears waders that come clear to his chin  
and a life jacket at his mother's wise insistence.  
When, at the end of a long slog across the mud, we reach the skiff  
Pete, his brother, a veteran of a dozen campaigns,  
hauls him aboard by the scruff of his gear.

But the kid coils the line as Pete pulls the anchor.  
Nobody has to tell him.  
And as we set for the first time this season  
he neatly throws clear a loop of leadline from a binboard snag.

He pulls when we pull.  
He picks when we pick,  
making surprising quick work of your basic #1 double-gill-on-the-bagside,  
he hardly touches the fish.

When we take a break at the water's edge  
he's quick to the beach with the dipnet  
rounding up stragglers  
and climbs back in the boat three times.  
"Practicing", he says.

At the bottom of the tide we cut the skiff loose.  
Pete carves a tight turn at the outside buoy.  
The skiff pulls up easy alongside.  
I snag the trip line, tie it astern,  
Pete tows out and up  
until we like what we see and nod both.  
He cuts the throttle and I cast the buoy free.  
The boat drifts a moment in the lazy brown current and the blue two-stroke exhaust.

In the bow the new guy is watching.  
He hikes up his bibs,  
hooks his thumbs in his suspenders.  
"What'd we just do?" he wants to know.

## Gray in Yellow Headlights

*David Campiche*

In the early dawn headlights  
Rain and clouds and herringbone light  
Driven by hard winter storm.  
Flocks of cormorant—stung by the weather—  
Lift and bolt and fade away. Sometimes  
Our love runs wild like this.

In the early dawn headlights  
Rain and thick fog—dark as a coot's feathers—  
Wrap faint, middle-eryth landscapes.  
At just light, sunrise is always a surprise.  
With each morning tide, a lesson unfolds.  
Sometimes our love is unpredictable like this.

In the early dawn headlights,  
A family of deer  
Canter beside the highway,  
Sheepish as a young girl  
At her first school dance.  
Sometimes our love is shy like this.

In early dawn headlights,  
Coming off the long bridge at Astoria,  
Faint deck lights of an ocean freighter  
Announce themselves softly.  
Astoria waits beyond,  
Gray in yellow headlights.



## **Butterfly Barbarians**

*Amy Willis*

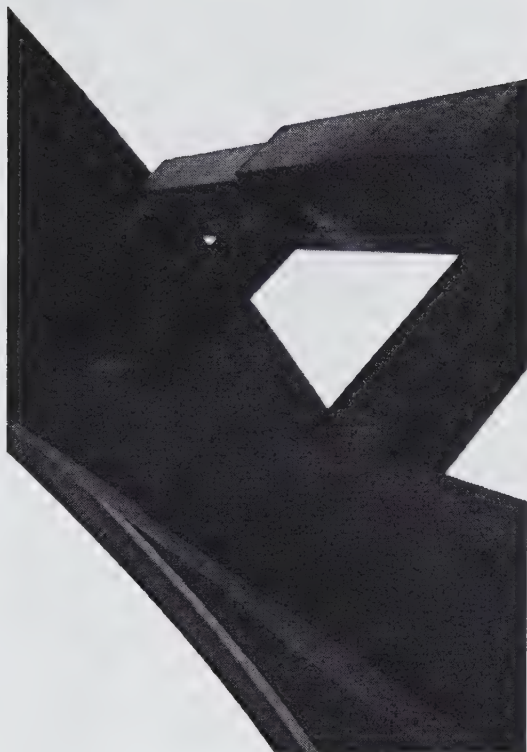
We were butterfly barbarians  
our nets and jars in place.  
Twenty something little people,  
out of class, all day recess.  
I caught a grasshopper,  
felt guilty, let it go.  
The Boys caught everything with legs,  
anything that moved.  
Nothing has changed much.  
I never liked catching pretty things  
to keep for good.  
Swore I could see them  
looking back, asking me, "Why?"  
On the bus, the Boys  
shook their jars,  
laughing at the misery  
of something smaller,  
the beauty and the mystery missed.  
Nothing has changed much.  
I don't see many butterflies  
anymore. Bumblebees are gone.  
Dragonflies are rare.  
Katydid are prehistoric.  
Boys still catch anything with legs.  
Nothing has changed much.  
We collect what's left: to have, to touch.

## .03 Units Deducted

*Amy Willis*

Text messages at four AM.  
New friend, leave me alone.  
I'm trouble, big chaos  
you'd be surprised to know.  
I am much more impressive  
on paper. Don't tell me  
I make your day brighter,  
or have a cute smile,  
that you love my artwork.  
Tell me you understand  
why my friends died,  
why my parents divorced,  
why my mood swings.  
Tell me Truth.  
Don't romanticize the use  
of overpriced cell phones.  
You are twenty six hundred  
miles away, in Alaska.  
Just another pipe dream.

## Bridge 1, 2, and 3



*Ben Hunt*



## The River

*Patrick Overton*

*Dedicated to Elmer Crow— Nimiipuu Salmon Warrior*

Rivers don't run straight.  
They wander, wind, turn on a whim,  
curve undeterred by rock or land  
or any previous pattern established  
some other spring.

As rivers grow, a natural symmetry unfolds,  
relationships revealed as deep and rapid currents  
force a pathway based on shared geography;  
two things in one place— essential balance  
of give and take in shared space.

When not driven by spring-intensity, rivers do not rush,  
reveal no urgency to reach their distant destination,  
seem content to move in slow, summer, serpentine swirls,  
sculpting rainbow-misted waterscapes along the way  
like potters shape their clay.

It was like this, in the beginning, before we came,  
before we took control, imposed our will and way,  
before we dammed its force,  
transformed the river's natural course,  
upset the fragile harmony of nature and humanity,  
denying Salmon their genetic destiny.

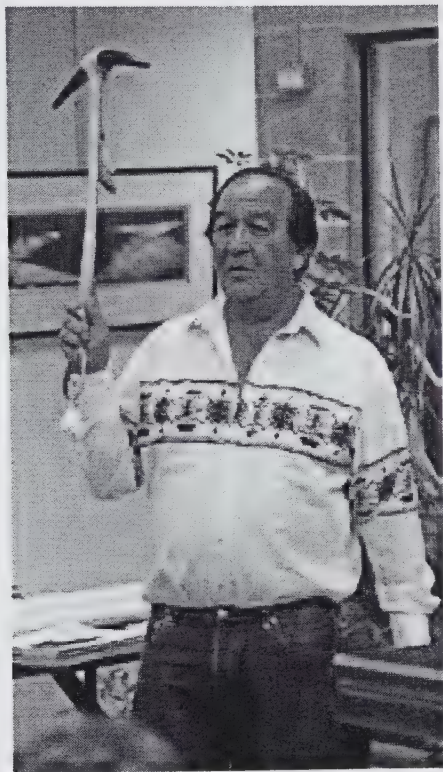
We must learn to love the river.  
We have no choice,  
it is part of who we are, together—  
a shared geography for all of us,  
a common space shaped by common source.

We must also learn the lessons rivers share,  
a simple wisdom found within their constant flow,  
relationships begun when water's journey



starts from source to sea and back again,  
the story each and every one of us must know—  
the truth that all the rivers tell:

My river is your river— what happens to the one,  
will to the other, happen as well.



Elmer Crow

*Don Anderson*

# The Greenman House

*Anne Nixon*

The last time I saw the old house was in the summer of 1986, just hours before it was demolished.

"Can we go inside, just step inside the back door?"

"Wouldn't be safe," a construction worker told me, scowling as he shook his head.

It was obvious, really, but I had to ask. The men had been hired to tear the derelict down because life had left its old bones.

But it was once as full of vim and vinegar as any two structures in Oysterville ever were...

In the 1800s, after the white man's discovery of oysters in Willapa Bay, a boom town sprang up at the north end of what is now called the Long Beach peninsula. What became my grandparents' home was at that time The Swan Hotel and a house owned by the Greenman family, side by side. The hotel's customers often arrived in a stage coach, pulled by horses over the hard, wet ocean beach sand. Finally reaching Oysterville, their heads and joints aching for hours, they must have longed for warmth and food and a bed.

"Thank God," some probably groaned as they climbed down to the wood-planked road in front of the hotel, "we're here at last."

By the time I was born almost one hundred years later my relatives had bought the two buildings. They needed more bedrooms for their inn a few hundred yards down the road, for each spring an increasing number of people wrote for reservations. Oysterville's booming economy had been in full swing when the buildings rose, but the county seat and oysters faded away, so hundreds of folks left, too. My grandmother and her three sisters decided the hotel and house, forged together, would be ideal. Boarders could sleep there and walk south along the picturesque little town's road to "take their meals" at the inn.

Before long the Swan Hotel and Greenman house were joined to make one.

"Come quick if you want to see the last nails hammered in," someone called, hurrying through a gate at the inn. A cousin, young and newly married into the family, rushed north to see the spectacle, and she told me years later it had been exciting. For the carpenters it must have been a complicated job, for whoever could wield a hammer, screwdriver and saw in those days was good enough to qualify as a builder.



Architectural features from that combining made for idiosyncrasies; it was different from any other home and I found it fascinating.

The roof line may have been odd, but lacy trees in the front yard softened it. Most enticing to me were its two front doors that faced west and north. I could run up onto the long front porch and have a weighty decision to make. Which door should I go in that day? If I chose to go right, through the north door, I could be in the living room where Grandma's lovely cup cupboard stood between wavy glass windows that reached from almost ceiling height to within a foot of the floor. Its glass doors caught light reflected off a mirror on the opposite wall and produced a shimmery elegance. The cupboard was full of huge mustache cups, many delicate ones for ladies, and tiny demitasse cups. It was a simple room, free of knickknacks and frills, and no lamps because there was no electricity. On the far wall a fireplace came alive only when boarders needed warmth in summer or the family got together there in winter. But most family gatherings happened at the big house, the inn, and this room lay closed and cold all winter. I entered only to peek at the brightly colored cups.

Most days I used the other one; the door jams were only inches apart as they ended up in the 90 degree angle of the porch. Walking in, I had the choice of two hallways,



some unusual straight ahead into the Greenman house side, or to the right for the taller hotel section. Going toward the old Swan, I could soon turn left and walk down a long hall to the warm, busy kitchen. But the other one was more fun and interesting. I walked straight ahead and turned right at the end, where a couple of steps led to a square platform, then down two more stairs to that first hallway. A quick left and I was in the kitchen. What child wouldn't have loved all those decisions for twists and turns to visit her Grandma and Grandpa? I adored it! The little platform between the double steps was a favorite place for me to practice jumping, and I went there often. It was a landing for the Swan Hotel's stairway to the upstairs bedrooms, open on one side as it hugged the hotel's original outer wall.

Though it sounds complicated, and it may have been to first time visitors, when I was a little girl I didn't know the story of its past, so it seemed normal. There was a softness about that house, inside and out; in fact, when I painted a watercolor of it much later I used muted greens and grays, for that was what my memory of the house had become.

Grandma was an artist and did all the wallpapering and painting for the inn and her own house. She often chose pastels-pink roses, lime colored leaves with narrow veins, and stems twisting about. Yellow and apricot were colors she loved, and maybe they were roses, too, always the old fashioned ones that, when they opened, were fat like peonies. Tall men helped her paste borders just below the ceiling. I remember the acrid smell of flour and water wallpaper paste and wisps of gray hair straying from a twisted knot at the top of her head.

A rail-less back porch stretched along the west kitchen wall, raised about three feet from the grass. Grandpa often sat out there on an old kitchen chair in the afternoon when he finished his milking and garden chores. With a small, sharp knife he "whittled" soft little whiskers of wood at one end of kindling he used for starting a fire. They ended up in a box that also held larger dry pieces of split wood, all the length of the cook stove, front to back.

Grandma's beautiful kitchen stove was one reason why I wanted to enter the house that day of its demise. It had been the color of soft, creamy, thick crust as it formed on a bucket of Grandpa's cooling milk, and it was trimmed with narrow green stripes. On its top surface Grandma cooked pancakes for us, asking "Who wants a kitty?" or, "What do you think this is?" while we guessed any number of animals. We never ate generic, round hot cakes in that house. A warming oven stretched across the top, just within Grandma's reach. On the left side of the stove top two round plates could be removed with a short metal lifter for maximum heat. My heart always beat fast as I saw flames shoot up from the hole, before someone set a pot over it. Below were two little square doors, the top one for shoving in wood, the lower for removing ashes. Wonderful smells came from the oven. Grandma's yeasty Parker house rolls had to be tasted



immediately, and butter dripped onto the oilcloth-covered table as we devoured them.

"Where is the old kitchen stove?" I asked a worker. I'd told Don about it and was anxious he see how it looked, so we hurried over to the adjoining shed where the man directed. The old building was full of junk. The stove didn't seem to be there-but it was, under the old, built-up trash. Its round temperature gauge in the center of the oven door looked back at us like an ancient, rusty, filthy, evil eye.

"There it is, there it is," I cried, with a mixture of excitement and horror. At the edges of the circular dial the lovely paint was stained and chipped, though we could see only a few inches of surrounding door. The rest was under too much debris. I'd been searching for the stove like I would an old friend, and now at last we seemed to be gazing at each other. It was an important but sad moment.



We walked back to the yard.

"Did you find a beautiful chrome and black pot bellied stove in the front, first floor bedroom?" I asked. I spread my arms wide, then moved them to show it would be chest high.

"Nope."

I wasn't surprised. The house had been abandoned for years.

It had been quite a room and that silvery and ebony stove no doubt had caused

many a boarder to draw in a quick breath. There were two doors, as happened in many rooms of that unusual house, the first immediately left inside the Greenman house entrance. With a twist of the low, black porcelain doorknob a person entered, almost beside the first of two windows like those in the living room. They overlooked the front porch which stretched to the end of the house. Directly across the room another window allowed in warm light from the south, filtered through Grandma's favorite weeping willow tree. Next stood a white iron bed with a homemade quilted spread. (Those beds were half inch thick iron, twisted into a pattern that became the head and foot boards; fancy ones had shiny little brass knobs at each of the four corners. The iron could be painted any color, but our family always chose white.) Around the next corner a small commode, or wooden chest, stood against the west wall. Since there was no indoor plumbing, and none outside either, each bedroom was supplied with a large, shallow porcelain bowl and huge pitcher for sponge baths. A chamber pot peeked out from under bedclothes, the only way for a guest to empty his or her bladder at night without going to the outhouse. And finally, almost centered in this lovely room, was the majestic wood stove that shone like a jewel whether the day was sunny or dark. It's chrome was always polished, body forever kept blackened, like it was ready for close inspection. I was glad it hadn't rusted away inside the shambles of that house.



The second door, at the far corner behind the stove, led to another bedroom at the back of the house. It had two exits also, one an archway into a room only large enough for a cot, and the other to the kitchen.

I remember all of us cousins playing one afternoon in the tiny room. Brilliant sun shone in, onto the little bed that had become an operating table for our oldest cousin, "the doctor." I wasn't the patient, but probably a bossy little nurse. We were the two oldest ones, so obviously weren't going to be the ones under the knife.

Grandma and Grandpa lived in their Greenman house kitchen. A country home's bedroom was used for six to eight hours, but the kitchen was where the rest of the day happened. Theirs was the original open floor plan, with a big table at one end and cooking, canning, baking and washing at the other. It needed no space for refrigerator or dishwasher, no double sink for a disposal or overhead area for microwave. Inside the back door a pitcher pump sat next to their shallow, rectangular sink, stained by minerals in the well water. Were there shelves for dishes over a drain board? I don't know. I remember the stove, then a deep box holding fire wood and Grandpa's whit-tled starters. That was it, the corner and the end of kitchen appliances. But Grandma had a special metal piece of furniture for her bread baking supplies and for kneading dough. It was against the next wall. When she opened a tall door near her left shoulder I watched as she reached in to twist a little handle at the base of a huge storage bin; sifted powdery flour tumbled down into her tan ceramic bowl. She could pull out an extension to make more counter space, and behind two doors below were pans of all sizes. With loaves in the oven, Grandma washed her bowls and spoons, closed up her baking cabinet, and it was converted back into a light green enameled cupboard. I thought of it as magical. That was the Greenman house kitchen, a bare bones room where everything went on, the core of a home in those days.

Between the outer wall of the kitchen and the woodshed was a space of just over a yard wide, which ran 10 or 12 feet deep. When the sink's pump gave way to a modern spigot for cold water, someone decided to convert that area into a dark little dungeon of a shower room. But Grandma's artistry transformed it into a magnificent place to wash off sand and grit.

Her oldest granddaughter also painted. They designed an underwater scene that stretched from wall to wall, of bright fish swimming through blue-green water among long pieces of whip-like kelp and wide, flat sea grasses. Down by the floor she painted mounds of sand where crab and clams and sand dollars and jelly fish lived. They included the door, so as a bather soaped up, he was surrounded by beauty. Somewhere there had to be a kerosene lamp, lighting that slice of blackness; but carrying one around became a way of life as soon as the boarder arrived, so that proved no problem.



After seeing the woodshed's chaos, I wasn't sure I wanted to ruin my memory of the shower. But it was impossible not to look, in case one of the home's most outstanding features had survived. Could it be exactly like it had been so many years before, colors inspired by the ocean and the creatures who lived there? I fought back and forth with myself, first yes, then no, but in the end I had to see it. Don yanked and pulled at the door, assuring me the house would have been demolished without anyone knowing what was nestled into that long, narrow space. Finally it broke open and we turned on a flashlight and made our way inside a few feet, dismissing the carpenters who saw no point in what we were doing.

The paint had faded, so the aqua water was a sickly gray, and the fish, originally bright stripes and spots, were an all-over brown or pale yellow. No waving plants rose from the sea floor, and the crab and other creatures were covered with black rot that had overtaken much of the shower. We covered our noses to keep out the stench.

I was happy nobody had found the space and thrown trash inside. In all those years and the way the house had been treated, the shower was in amazingly good shape. We turned toward the afternoon light and Don slammed the door shut again.





I stood back among the mens' tools and machinery and looked up at the house. What a mess it was, like a windstorm of dirt and mud had whipped through in the moments between my childhood and the present. Shingles were decayed and missing; two little square windows in an upper room that overlooked Grandpa's barnyard were open to flap in the breeze. Four old ones along the kitchen wall were better than I might have expected, with panes of glass gone but the frames intact. I could see the back porch had been lower than I remembered-I'd been shorter, of course.

I snapped a few pictures as the workmen closed in.

"Let's go look at the front of the house," I told Don stubbornly. The men could wait until we were ready to leave.

We walked back along the kitchen to where the tiny "operating room" so long ago had been our summer afternoon's play area, turned left along the wall of the beautiful silver and black stove's room, to the front of the house. Then we went north, to where the roof line rose; that was where the Swan Hotel began. I had never noticed how the first floor siding changed to shingles in a fancy pattern on the peak above. In some places they formed diamonds, and in others looked like an upside-down wooden fence; the designs were varied, possibly because there were only a few of each for whoever nailed them there.

That was enough, we'd go no farther because the men had been patient. It's odd that I don't remember whether there were still two front doors, and maybe I'm glad I don't.

Today, at the southwest corner of the only stop sign in Oysterville, not one thing is the same on that piece of property. Gone is Grandma's weeping willow. The barn where Grandpa milked his cows and squirted milk into the waiting mouths of kitties, and Nancy and me, has disappeared. At the edge of the road their wire fence, of big squares, that served as a trellis for soft red moss roses, has been torn down.

Next door the home that was once a cottage for the inn's boarders is still there, and across the street the Stoner house stands, both younger than Grandma and Grandpa's. It makes me feel odd to think I'm the only person in our family who remembers the way it used to be. Our oldest cousin has passed away and the others were too young.

What a bittersweet afternoon that was-one of happiness to have discovered the old kitchen stove and shower, but sadness because the house had become a slovenly derelict. I was able to relive the splendor and history of that lovable old place before it was gone forever.

I have never forgotten that day

## Vi Hokannson Gale

*Jacqui Horton*

Here I am at another crossroad, suitcase in hand, ready to go. I am lighthearted and looking forward to each new adventure. I get that from Mother. Sitting here, I see beautiful flowers and delight in their fragrance. Roses are my favorite flowers but I enjoy and appreciate all varieties. It reminds me of grandmother when she cut and pinned a fresh geranium to my coat the day I took my first trip at the age of 6.

How well I remember that fateful day in 1923 when Mother, Father, my 2 1/2 year old brother, Harry, and I left our home in Dala-Jarna, Sweeden. With all of our possessions packed in 1 trunk, & 2 suitcases we set sail on the Norwegian ship, Bergen Fjord. Thank goodness I took after Father and did not get sea sick like most. You might say the others were green with envy!? Mother tried to help the motion sick people with a bottle of hannonsaft, raspberry syrup, that was supposed to keep you from getting sick. That was the only time I threw up. They put a mug of that sweet concoction down me and it came right back up. They should have left that alone.

We traveled economically, in steerage to America. We were so excited to see the statue of Liberty in New York but the anticipation of living in America was dulled by the long lines and medical exams for immigrants checking in to the U.S. To further add to our anxiety we could speak no English and communicated only through crude hand signs. I remember Father holding out a handful of our hard earned money for people to take what they needed when we bought food, and other necessities. Lord knows whether they took more or less than we owed. Honest or not we had no choice but to trust. How frightening.

Another Swede helped us find our way to the train station and we began our locomotive adventure to the promised land of Clatskanie, Oregon where mother had friends. John Larsson met us at the railroad station and we piled into the 1923 overland. It was here that father was hired at Simon Benson's lumber camp as a timber feller and choker setter. We lived together at that logging camp in a company cabin for one year until it was time for me to start school in town. Everything was new and wondrous and my most vivid and treasured memory was climbing up on the locomotive, sitting by the boiler and riding to town to shop. The Speeder, would streak straight through town and dump off the logs in the river. It would then let us off in town to do some shopping at Evenson's grocery store, which of course was less expensive than the store at camp. I knew first hand what they meant when they said, "I owe my soul to the company store." After shopping in the stores we loaded the locomotive and returned to camp. On hot days the train might stop at the bridge and some of the boys would dive off the trestle into the Clatskanie River to cool off. The river of course was much deeper then.

After a year at the camp out came the suitcases and my mother, brother and I moved to a little house on Tichnor Street so I could start school. Father stayed and worked at the lumber camp 6 days a week. On Saturday nights when we were a little older my brother and I would walk down town to where the bridge crossed the Clatskanie River. The whole thing was just a swamp planked over with a boardwalk. We would sit there waiting until the train came down the track bringing the men back from camp. Father would greet us by pulling 2 candy bars out of his pockets as he got off the train. We made the most of Father's one night at home and I remember fondly Eriksson's grove where the Swedish men built a dance pavilion. Oh the parties we had with delicious pies and cakes made by the women. We even danced around the May pole each midsummer. Julia Gustafson's father would play the accordion and sometimes the harmonica at our gatherings.

It was a wonderful time for the whole family but one day and one night wasn't enough for quality family time but it was our reality.

It took quite a few years of working 6 days a week when my father, along with the other loggers, demanded a few improvements like better wages, and mattresses with out lice and so on and so forth.

Once in school it took me a while to catch up to the others because I didn't know English. It was back to using hand signs. There was an awful buzz around my head of words I did not understand. I learned the word door was similar to the Swedish word dorr and oh how I wanted out the door at school. The phonics charts we used were most helpful with my English but it was my wonderful teacher, Miss Hill that helped me graduate on time from the very first grade school class in the new school. She was the one that made sure I caught on and that I was not too much persecuted. We Swedes wanted to learn English fast because the other children heckled and laughed at us till we got it right. Children can be so cruel. I remember my brother and I being penned up in somebody's wood shed one morning with kids threatening to make "Swede pie" out of us, and we were frightened out of our heads. More than anything we wanted to blend in with the others. I helped Mother learn English at home by using my school readers and I coached her on the right inflection of speech. In 1934 I graduated with the other 30 students from Clatskanie High School.

We were pretty poor I guess and Father would teach us to weave little fish nets with little shuttles for toys. Mother, ever the creative one, used the mail order catalogue pages to fold imaginative creations, birds, frogs, boats and the like. Where we Swedes learned Japanese Origami I don't know. As a family we did take long walks in the woods toting a picnic basket to enjoy. We never ate at restaurants but we had plenty of Mother's home baked bread, fresh strawberries, raspberries, potatoes, rutabagas from the garden and flowers that graced our little table. Did I tell you how much I

love roses? The hunting was good, too. Venison, grouse, pheasant and fish were plentiful. We canned everything!

We walked everywhere then. We had no cars. We walked out of economic necessity and never even thought about it being exercise. How elated I was to land a job as the city librarian. I worked 5 hours a day, 3 in the morning, and 2 in the evening from 7—9p.m., 6 days a week of course. Saturday hours did cut into my social life. Later I got a job wrapping and selling machine sliced bread at the bakery. We wrapped the bread in wax paper and then shoved it into a sealer. Even with the bakery job I was still the librarian working 2 hours each evening.

In 1940 out came the suitcases and I went to Portland to live. I was working as a waitress at the 11th Ave. Restaurant when I met Jim Gale. He was a gas station attendant who frequented the restaurant and one thing led to another and so and so forth. We were married in 1942 in Vancouver, Washington. By that time the war had broken out and we began traveling until Jim was called overseas. During the war while experiencing life as a young military wife I constantly composed poetry. After WWII, in the early 50s, when we were establishing our household in the Parkrose area of Portland, I became sort of famous for my poetry. I didn't receive money for my entries but I'm proud to say I won a washer and dryer, a cap and gas range, a red vinyl top kitchen table with matching chrome chairs and a chest style freezer that still works today for us in a slogan-and jingle-writing contests. We Swedes are very pragmatic you know. I do know that Jim was a great fisherman and kept that freezer full. I tried fishing with him a couple of times up on Wilawa Lake and every time I'd get a nibble I'd say, "Jim, that fish is telephoning, you know on the line."

After helping furnish our home I moved on to writing short stories, selling several in the early and mid-50's, but I found my real love was poetry. Imagine my delight when Alan Swallow, a prominent small press publisher, brought out my first book of poems, "Several Houses" in 1959. Later, I was one of the first poets selected for the "Poetry in Motion" series of works appearing on public buses and trains. It seems I'm always traveling somewhere in one form or another with or without suitcases!

As I sit here on my worn suitcase I travel back to my roots in Sweden with a picture of the old place.



## The House In Dalarna

*Jacqui Horton*

A recent snapshot from an aunt  
Proves disappointing for it shows  
The house exactly as it is;  
The narrow windows, sturdy lines,  
Provincial sash and trim invite  
No blurring of realities.  
My parents look. They shake their heads  
And name the winters long, severe.  
My father says the road which led  
That way grew ruts. My mother tells  
They carried water; twice, at night,  
And late, the midwife came by sled.  
Clearly I see them there, those two  
Who gave that house and me their youth:  
My other laying spoon and cup  
Then leaning at the door, aware  
Of shortened sun, a creeping shade,  
While father cycled slowly up.  
But through their grace I also knew  
The richer house where I was born:  
An attic where we kept rye bread  
On poles; bough mats before the door;  
A cellar where glassed lingon shone-  
The house that stood there for a child.

*From Several Houses, 1959*



Portal of Education

*Andrew Cier*

## Please forget me

*Dennis Warren*

poems never published  
are the best ones  
hidden in wooden drawers  
after the writer's death  
the poet God collects them

we read all the good people in poet's heaven  
leaving earth's desires  
with a Pulitzer prize  
which doesn't matter

one voice hidden becomes sunlight  
another the morning mist  
it's not nature speaking  
it's the poets you've never heard

please forget  
you've never read me

save me for later  
when I become the wind.

# 2008 PATRONS

Stricklin Farms  
Kirsten Trued  
Front Porch Institute  
Greg & Rita Hamann  
Rebecca Dean  
Cory Jenkins  
David Kruger  
Englund Marine  
Richard Rowland  
Dawn Wise  
Kirsten & Tom Horning  
John & Patience Wubben  
Mary Hill  
Deanna Gjovik  
Sunny Cook  
Robert & Thea Pyle  
Christine Riehl  
Charlotte DeWitt  
Deac Guidi

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**





1001 Commercial St.  
Astoria, OR 97103

## A Heart Of Glass Artist

Melanie Tessard  
Custom designs,  
creative possibilities!  
Classes & Supply's

503-325-5263  
aheart@iinet.com



1653 Jerome Ave  
Astoria, OR 97103  
503.325.0910  
1.866.252.0767  
www.clatsopcollege.com

## GODFATHER'S BOOKS AND ESPRESSO BAR

1108 Commercial • Astoria, OR 97103  
Phone: (503) 325-8143

# ESPY FOUNDATION

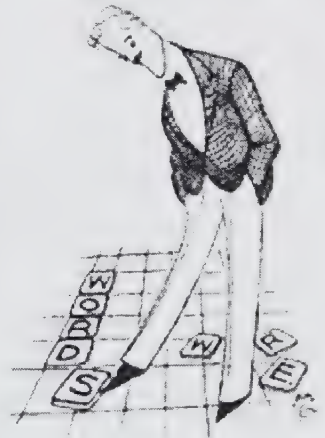
OYSTERVILLE, WASHINGTON | [ESPYFOUNDATION.ORG](http://ESPYFOUNDATION.ORG)

Created in 1998, The Espy Foundation is a non-profit organization based in Oysterville, WA and dedicated to advancing and encouraging visual artists, writers, musicians, and all aspects of creativity. Serving the needs of emerging as well as established writers and artists, the Foundation's core programs include the Residency Program and a Humanities and Arts Education Program for school students on Washington's Long Beach Peninsula. The Foundation is also building an impressive library of books on English language and usage.

If you would like to apply for a residency please refer to our website. To pledge your support, be on our mailing list, or visit call 360.665.5220 or [info@espyfoundation.org](mailto:info@espyfoundation.org)

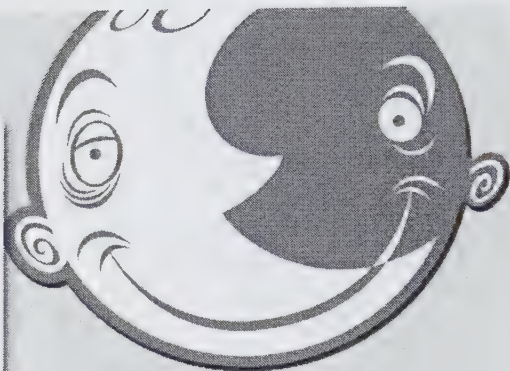
They shine more rutilant than ligulin-  
those labial componets that surround  
thy pericranial orifice, whereindenticula-  
tions niveous abound! Commingle them  
with my equivalents! Let like with like  
nectareously converge! "After all, her  
was only asking her for a kiss"

Willard Espy



# LUNAR BOY GALLERY

"Wisecrackers" by Amy Ruppel



ORIGINAL ART + PRINTS +  
BOOKS + JEWELRY + GIFTS

Please join us on the **2nd Saturday**  
of every month, 5 - 9 pm, for the  
Astoria Art Walk

ART + REFRESHMENTS + MUSIC

Lunar Boy Gallery • 1133 Commercial Street • Astoria • OR • 97103  
503.325.1566 • [lunarboygallery.com](http://lunarboygallery.com)



[jessereneno.com](http://jessereneno.com)

over 1000 works  
on display

work also  
available at

LunarBoy  
gallery

1133 Commercial St  
Astoria, OR 97103



# Pier 39 - Astoria Founded 1875

(503) 325-2502

[www.pier39-astoria.com](http://www.pier39-astoria.com)

Oldest Standing Cannery on the Columbia River



PIER 39 is a private, commercial restoration of the old Bumble Bee/CRPA cold storage.

Home of the Hanthorn Cannery Foundation.

Enjoy a glimpse into the history of Astoria—when salmon was king!

## PIER 39 - ASTORIA

100. 39th Street

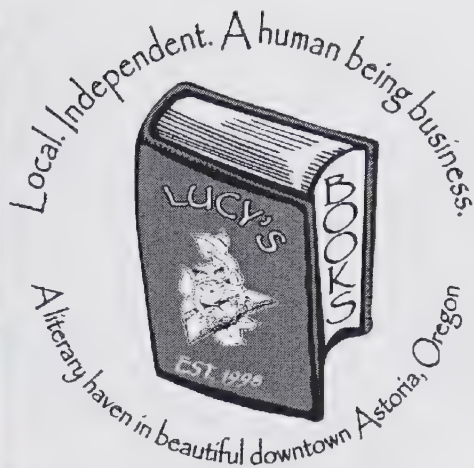
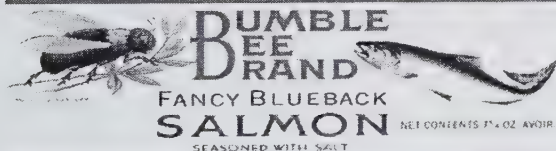
Astoria, Oregon 97103

Phone: (503) 325-2502

Fax: (503) 338-7358

[info@pier39-astoria.com](mailto:info@pier39-astoria.com)

[www.pier39-astoria.com](http://www.pier39-astoria.com)



348 12th Street

Astoria OR 97103

503-325-4210

[www.lucysbooks.net](http://www.lucysbooks.net)

Laura Snyder, Proprietor



1493 Duane Street Astoria, Oregon

503-338-7473 [www.bluescorcher.com](http://www.bluescorcher.com)

delicious food, joyful work, strong community

write with a view!  
[www.wrangells.org](http://www.wrangells.org)

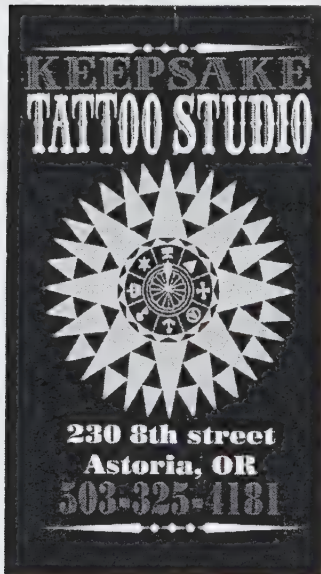
Wrangell Mountains Writing Workshop

August 12-18, 2008 McCarthy, Alaska



Sandra Alcosser, visiting writer

Nancy Cook, workshop director



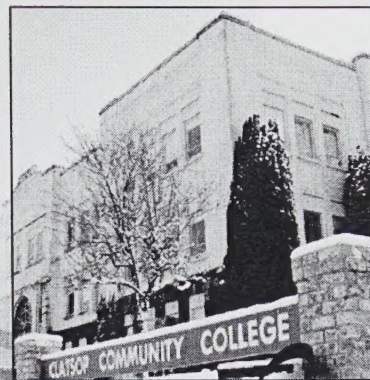
"ASTORIA"  
PAINT 'N THE ~~TOWN~~ RED



PAINT 'N THE TOWN RED

503-325-4988 DON NISBETT  
1271 COMMERCIAL ASTORIA, OR





CELEBRATING

*50 Years of Service!*

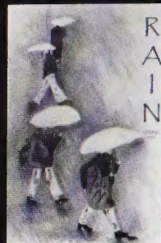
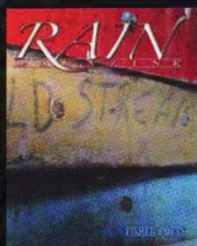


Photo courtesy of the Clatsop County Historical Society.









## 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY EDITION

*We live in a world where a few people could destroy us all, but a few people cannot save us. The math doesn't work that way. We can only be saved when many people—and finally all people—recognize and live by our true interdependence on earth.*

Kim Stafford

ROBERT MICHAEL PYLE

ROBERT ADAMS

ROYAL NEBEKER

CAROL KNUTSON

REBA OWEN

DAVID LEE MYERS

PATIENCE WUBBEN

AMY WILLIS

CASEY RUIC

DWIGHT NORFLEET

ANDREW CIER

LAREE JOHNSON

SUNNY COOK

CLAUDIA HARPER

DENNIS WARREN

ROSETTA HURLEY

STACY SMITH

BEN HUNT

PETER LINDSEY

DAVID CAMPICHE

JACQUI HORTON

PATRICK OVERTON

JAN BOND

KIM STAFFORD

JUDITH WOODWARD

SHAWN HUNTER

JAMES DOTT

TRICIA GATES BROWN

BARBARA STOFFER

JULIE WHITUS

VINCENT REYNOLDS

LUC FENIX

SUE FIRGHIL PARK

KIM HAZEL

VERA WILDAUER

KIMCHI VO

ALEX DUSTIN

BRUCE DUSTIN

FRANK MILLER

KITTY PAINO

JOHN SCHMIDT

DAVE DENSMORE

PAT DENSMORE

ANNE NIXON

SUE FALKNER WOOD

AND OTHERS